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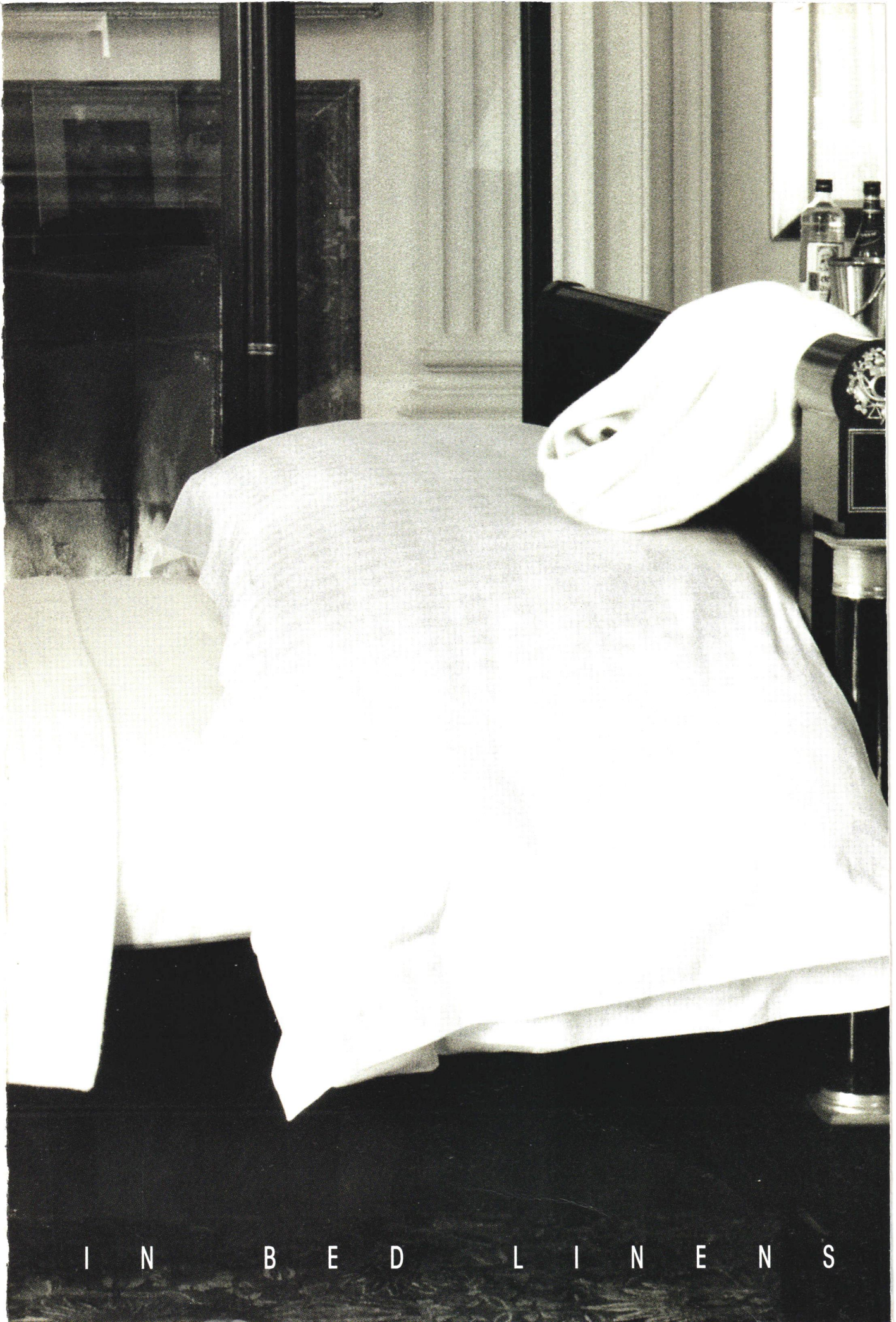
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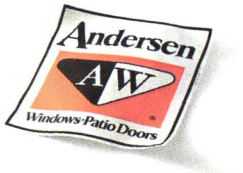
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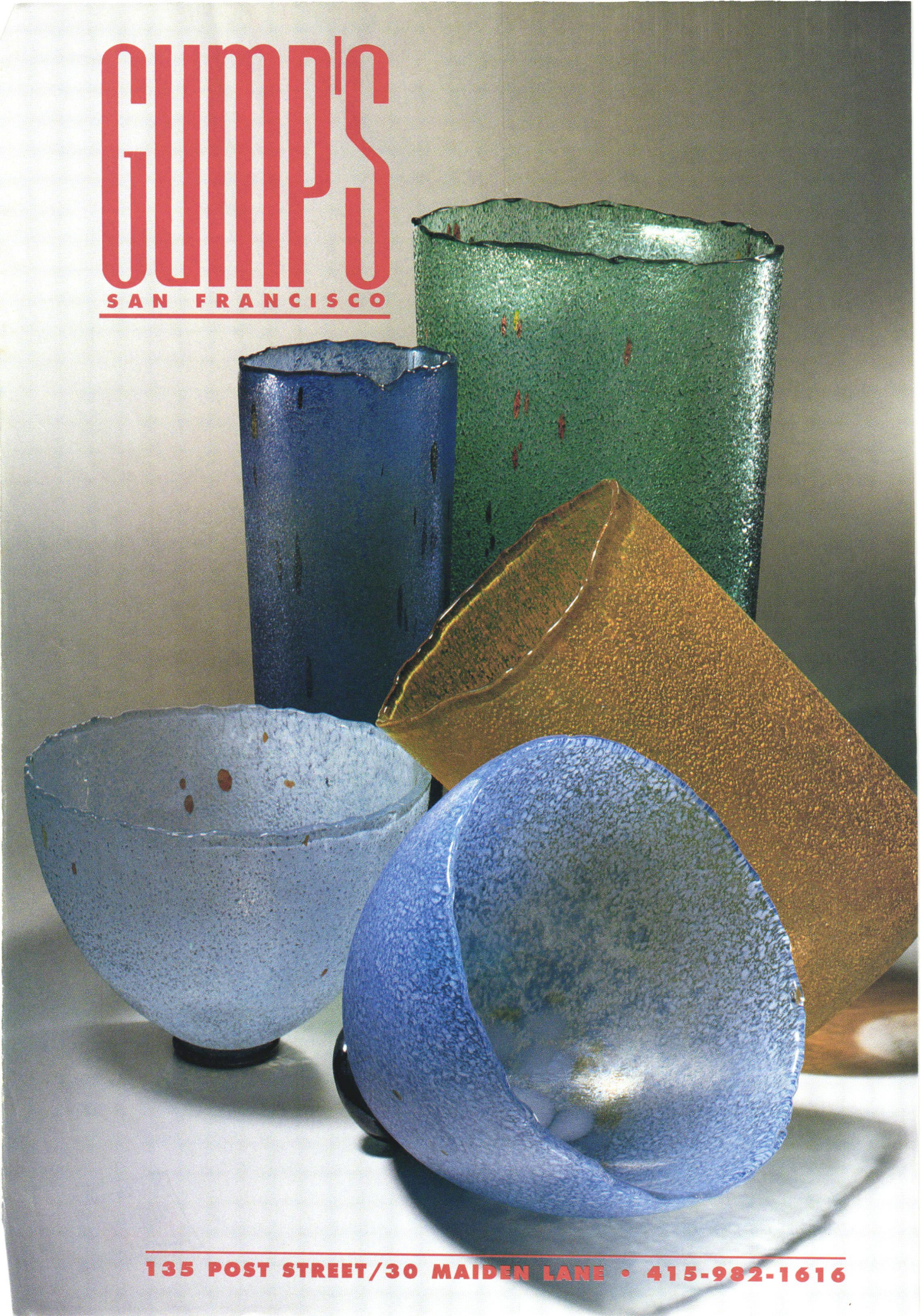
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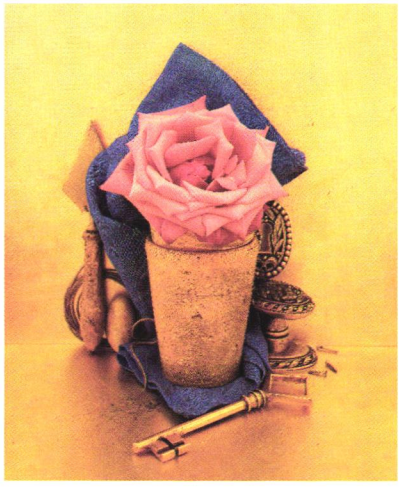
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HOUSE & GARDEN
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Threshold

September

Home Again . . .

. . . in Mississippi, a steely southern beauty

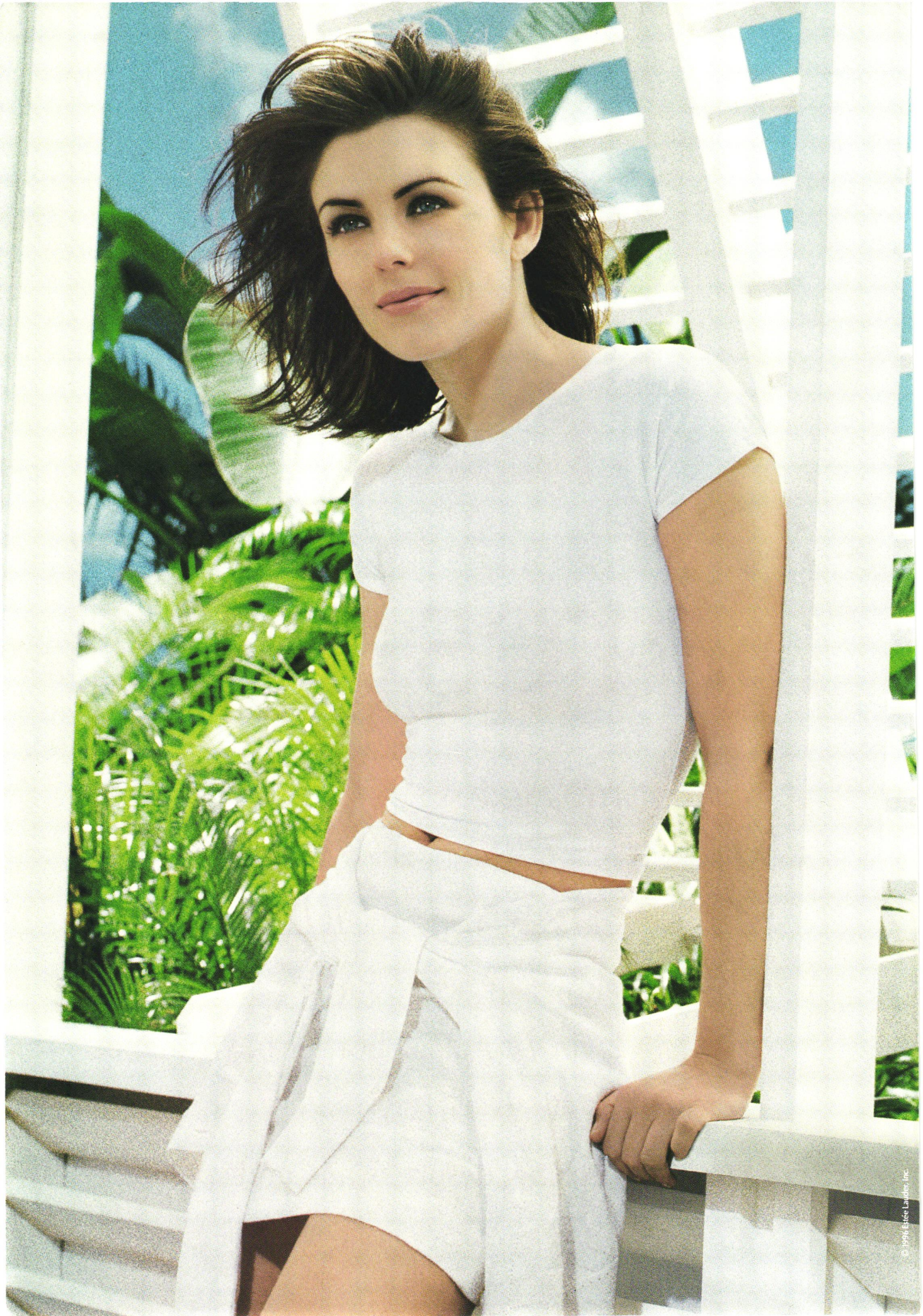
. . . in New York, the drama of restraint

. . . in Arizona, prickly heat in the garden

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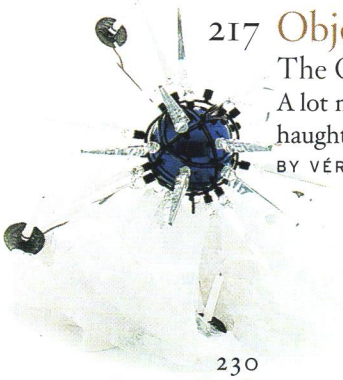
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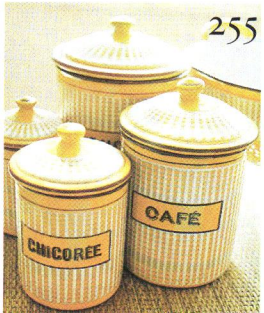


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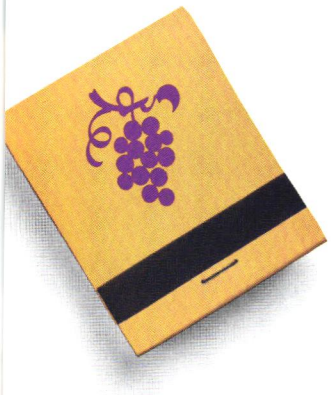


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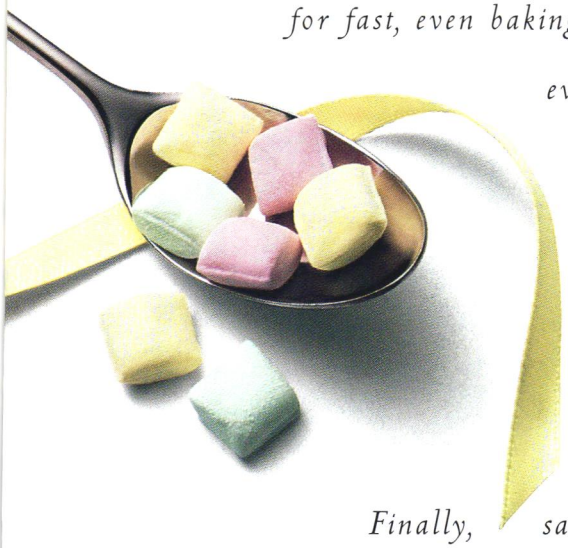






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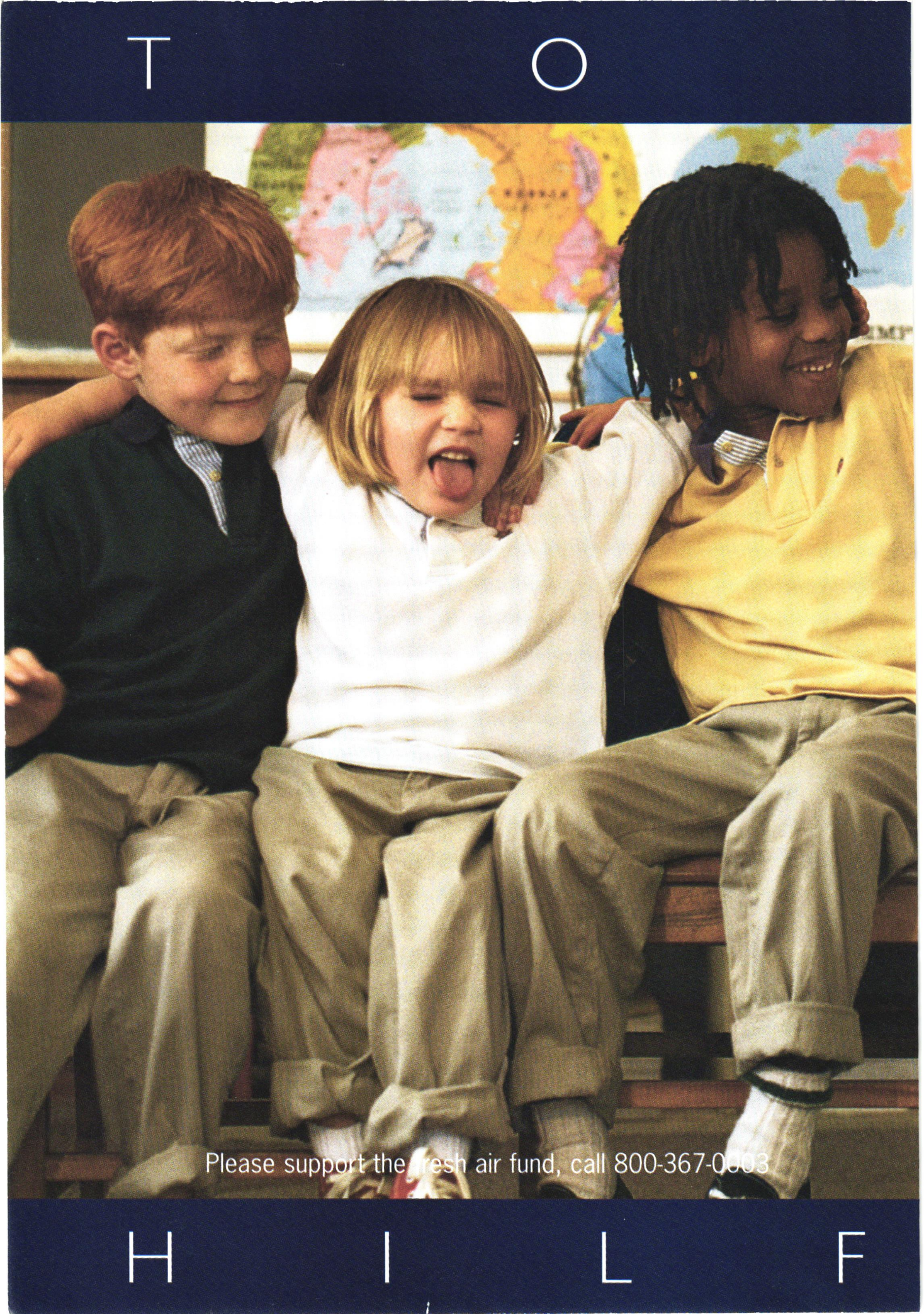


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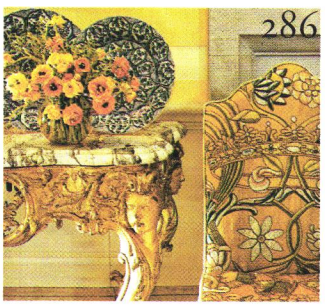

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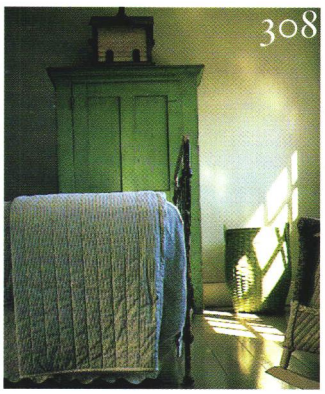
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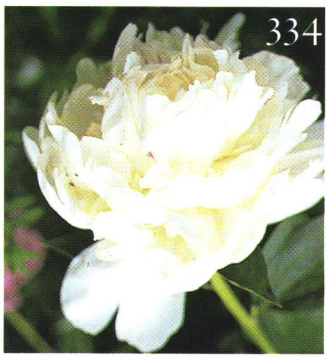
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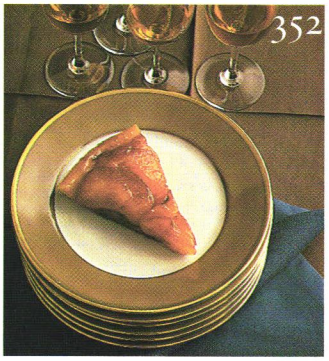
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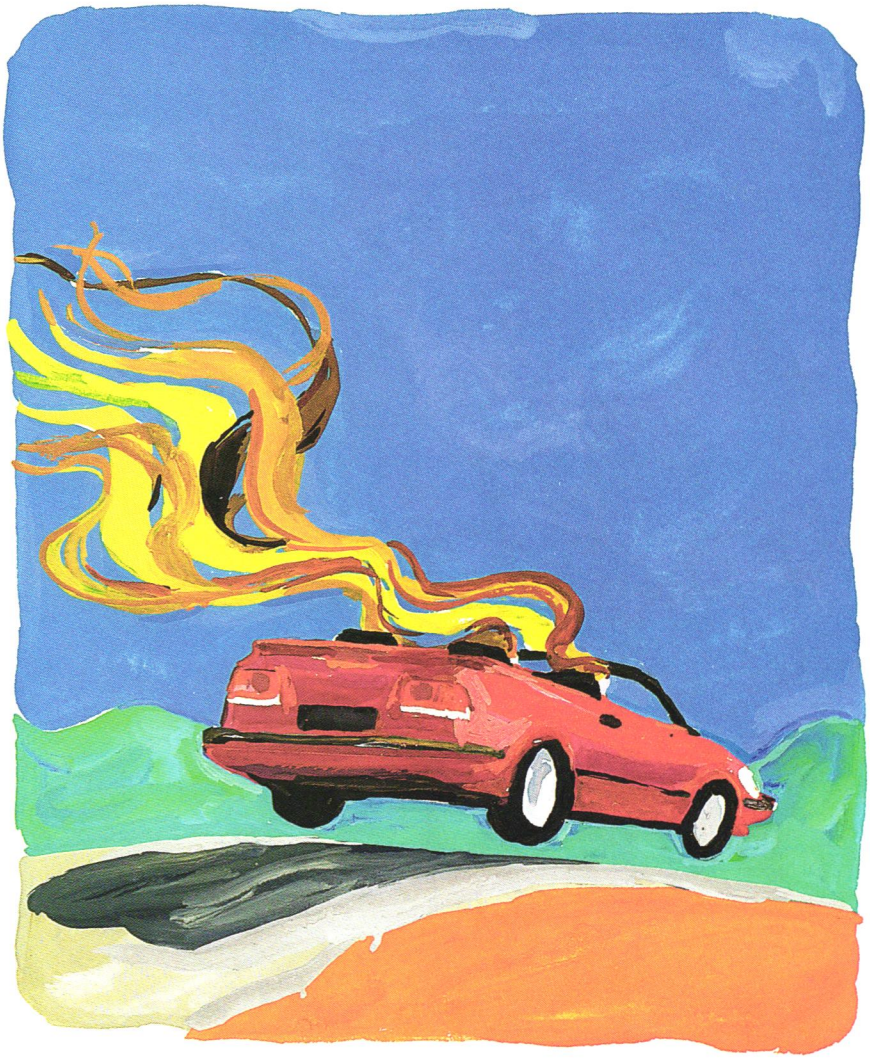

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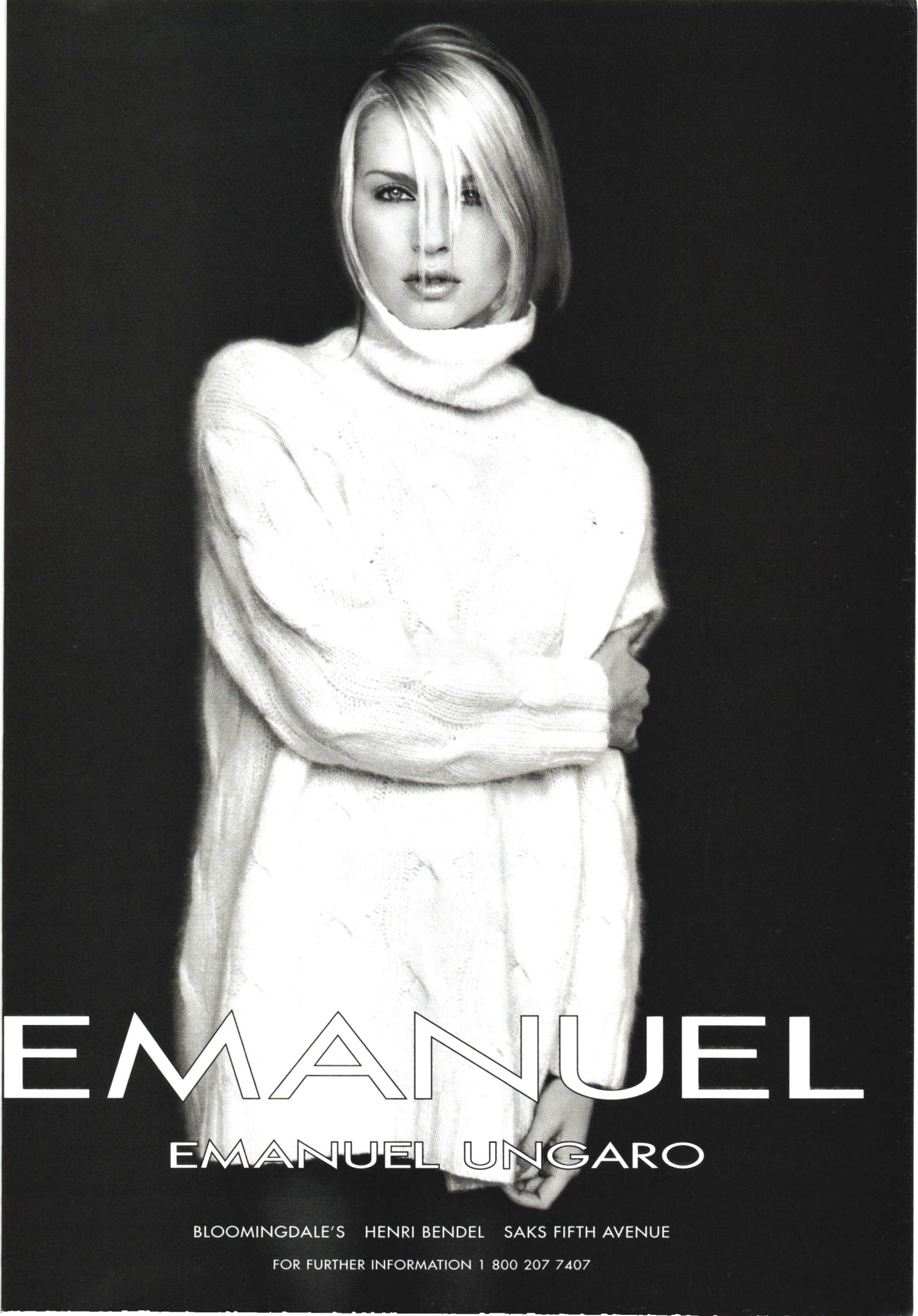


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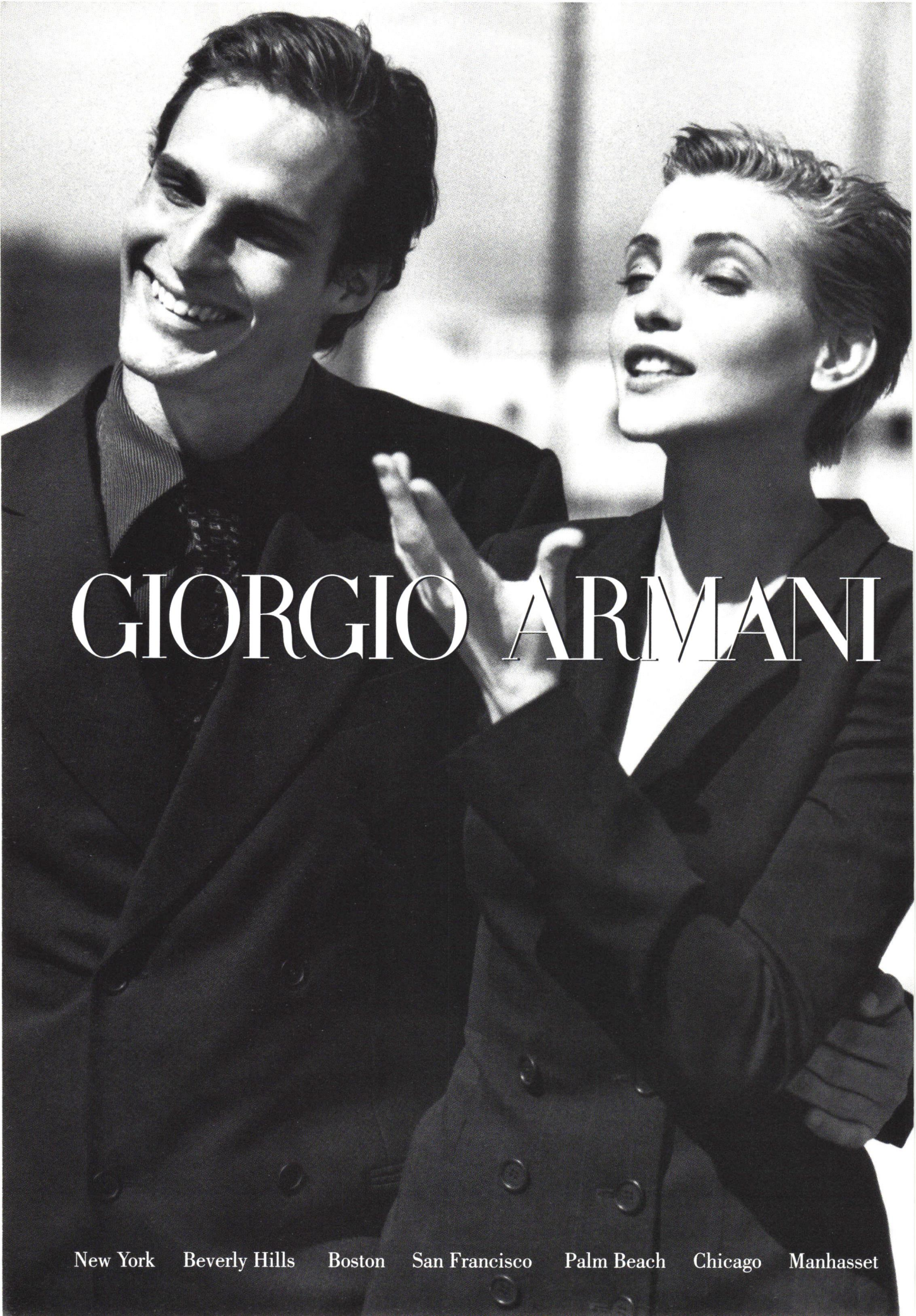

Ralph Waldo Emerson's
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with her Coach Berkeley Duffel Sac.
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Jennifer Emerson is studying to be a nurse practitioner and midwife in New York City. She enjoys reading, running and the great outdoors. She carries the new Coach Berkeley Duffel Sac, handcrafted of rugged suede and tumbled glove-tanned leather, No. 9010, $248. Her boots are also by Coach. To order, or for a complimentary catalogue, call 800 262-2411. Also available at Coach stores.


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Welcome

Turn on the Lights



HOME AGAIN. You've been away a while—a few days, a week, a month, a year or two, it doesn't really matter. The lawn is unkempt, the window box spills over in a tangle of weeds, the lettuce has bolted, the swing set hangs heavily, branches are thick in the dark green shade of summer's end.

The house has been empty, shuttered, braced against intrusion. You have the key. Inside all is dim, hushed. You take a few steps forward, drop the bags, and breathe in the slumber of your rooms. The dust has settled, but somehow the air is dense with stillness. Absence has a presence. You feel it and smell it and hear it; you sense it, the way an animal senses, fleetingly, in those first few moments through the door. The rooms are as you left them. But they're not as you remember them. Absence warps, distorts. Everything seems slightly aslant somehow. Bigger. Smaller.

Perhaps you're unable to stand the silence. Or perhaps you can no longer resist the embrace of rooms poised to take you in. You're moved to break the spell. You breathe in the heavy silence one last moment and you reach for a switch. Turn on the lights. You're back.

And you begin the tender work of transforming the rooms of a house into a home again.

There is such power in the return. The return of a loved one from a trip; the return of a child from school; the return of a book; the return of a favor; the return of a call. The return of the swans on the pond, the return of the flowers in the bed, year after year. We experience return so often in the routine of our daily lives that we forget to notice its magic.

Returning to a house, that's easy. Bringing a home back to life, that's trickier. Particularly if the home happens to be one made of ink and paper and hearts and minds. *House & Garden* has long been that kind of home for designers and artists and writers. So it is with great joy that we rouse it from what has turned out to be a short nap in its ninety-five-year history.

We have had the chance to think about what was so special about *House & Garden* while standing at the threshold of its return. There are many qualities about its previous incarnation that we wanted to honor. First among them, a passion for great design, from the design of a button to the design of a building. The reader has always been able to count on finding rooms—of the interior as well as the garden variety—of enormous chic. We continue to look for design that has integrity, interest, muscle, wit, beauty, charm, cachet, and comfort. Eye-catching excellence.

House & Garden has also long been open to change, sensitive about the future, proud of the breakthrough. Month after month, the pages of the magazine featured the newest work of designers Florence Knoll, Raymond Loewy, Donald Deskey, Ray and Charles Eames, Frank Lloyd Wright, Edward Wormley, Mary and Russel Wright . . . the alumni list is staggering. We intend to add to the roster.

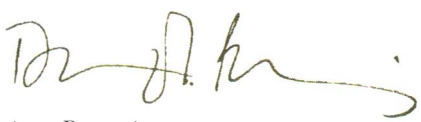
Over the years an infinite variety and range of design has been featured. We need not be so insecure as to think that there is only one way to express good taste. Design takes many paths; the houses of our lifetimes are filled with many rooms. Most of us don't know what "style" we are, exactly—and, in fact, we like to think we are many styles, and in flux; that we'll arrive at our own personal stamp. The woman whose bedroom is filled with classic English furniture from George Smith can find herself attracted to a chaise designed by John Saladino. The flea-market addict can weary of chipped china and wake up one morning with a yen for cobalt-blue Baccarat. *House & Garden* ought to be a place where the reader can indulge in a kind of design promiscuity, falling in love at the turn of a page with completely different kinds of rooms, not knowing whether the affair will last a day or a lifetime.

What *can* last a lifetime is the pleasure of making a home. Sure, shopping and arranging and collecting (or hoarding) are materialistic pursuits. But they are also connected to deeper passions, passions that have to do with the urge to create places to nurture our souls. We strive for comfort, beauty, harmony. We burrow into coziness; we play with the cutting edges of light and metal and glass; we retreat into other centuries. In their guesthouse, designers Stephen Sills and James Huniford set an Italian Louis XIV-style chair, covered with an antique Persian textile, on a floor of white marble cobblestones. The simple splendor of the chair resonates across ages and cultures. That's materialism in the service of history, a pretty grand idea. And why not?

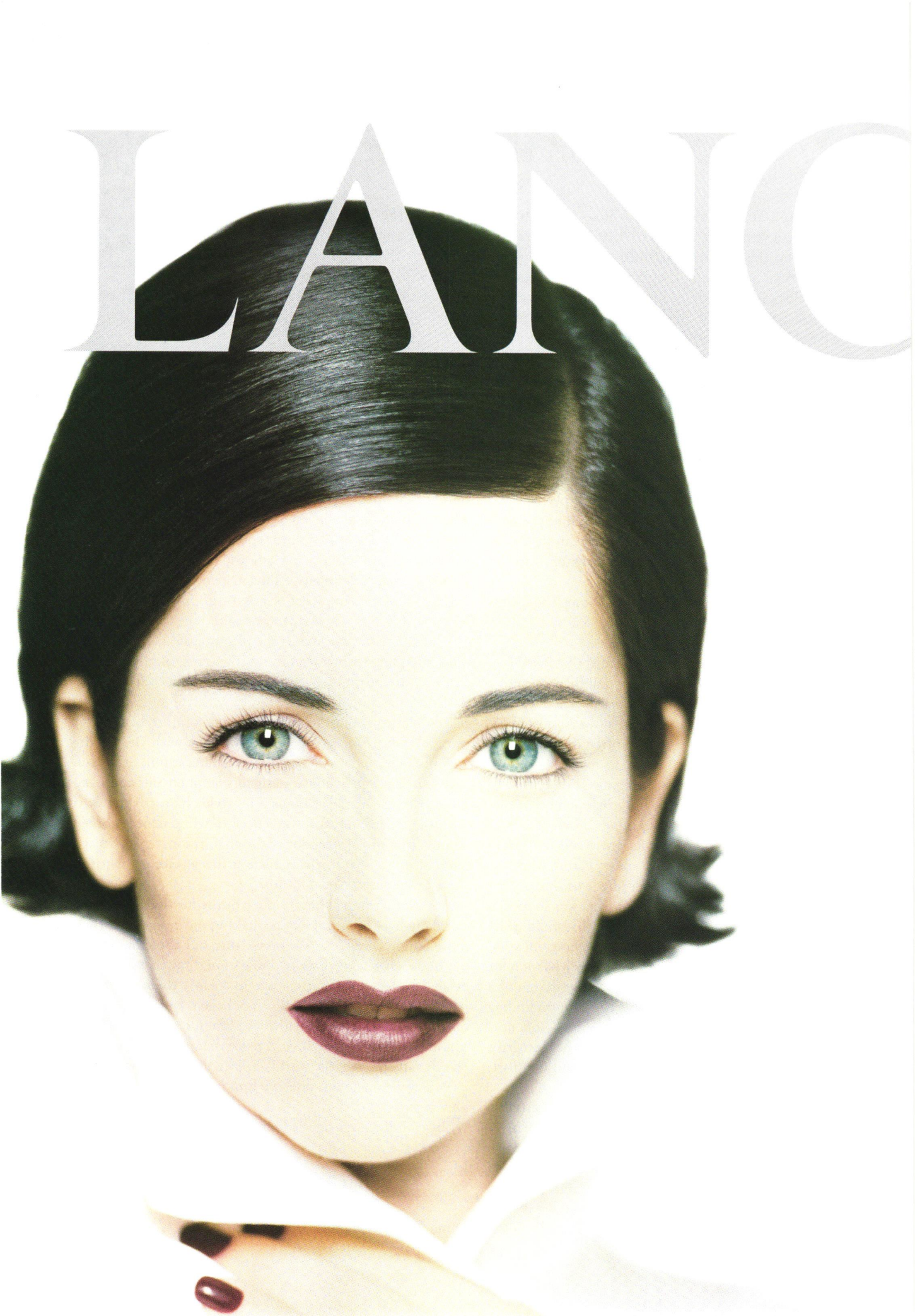
When you think about it, much of the hustle and bustle of our daily lives comes down to making our homes. Nothing more and nothing less. When we turn our thoughts to how our houses should feel, we're doing something that our mothers and fathers did, and their parents before them. We're acting on the desire to get home. To a haven, a place to protect ourselves and the ones we love. A place for sadness and celebration, for despair and love. A place that gives us strength to go out and embrace the world. A place that is its own world.

When we make a home, we honor life and we honor its blessings.

So go ahead. Turn on the lights. We're back.



Dominique Browning, EDITOR


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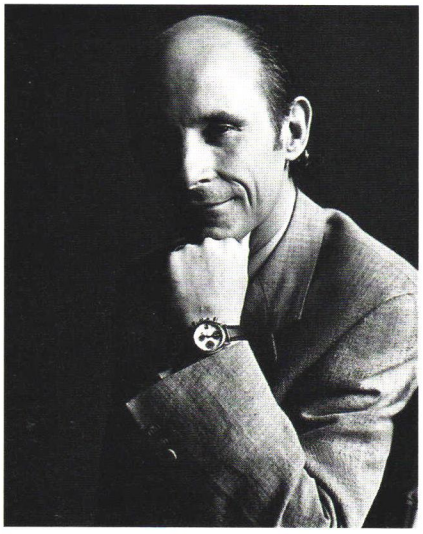
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Contributors

With a lot of help from our friends

SO WHAT'S NEW? Everything. In the pages that follow, you'll find our interpretation of the principles that have guided the editors and pleased the readers of this magazine in years past. *House & Garden* returns with the notion that there's nothing incompatible about interior decorating, good writing, and sharp thinking.



Our award-winning Art Director Robert Priest spent seven years as *GQ*'s creative director. Chairman of *American Photography* and a co-founder of *American Illustration*, he was also art director for *Esquire*, *Newsweek*, and *US*.

To highlight a few of the contributors and features of *House & Garden* today: the main interior portfolio is accompanied by "First Principle" and "Trade Secrets," pieces by Design Editor SUZANNE SLESIN that explain why a decorating scheme works, and how you might apply its principles to your own rooms. Editor-at-Large JAMES REGINATO joins in our design coverage, bringing his sharp eye and seasoned wit. Sometimes great design is the result of a happy accident, but most often it is an educated response to a problem. So, too, with making a garden: "Ground Rules," a column organized by Garden Editor SENGA MORTIMER, gives the reader a grasp of the principles at work in laying out a garden of any ambition. PATTI HAGAN brings a lively style and the brains to separate bulbs from dim bulbs in "Dig It." And speaking of lively curiosity, none can beat that of DAN SHAW, who brings an anthropologist's sense to the marketplace in "Domestic Bliss."

"Sketches" and "Dealer's Choice" take the reader inside the world of the design professionals who have such an impact on the way we think about our homes. "Object Lesson," a regular feature from VÉRONIQUE VIENNE, helps demystify intimidating furnishings—chandeliers, for instance. When you're spending enough money to make a big mistake, a little knowledge is a useful thing.

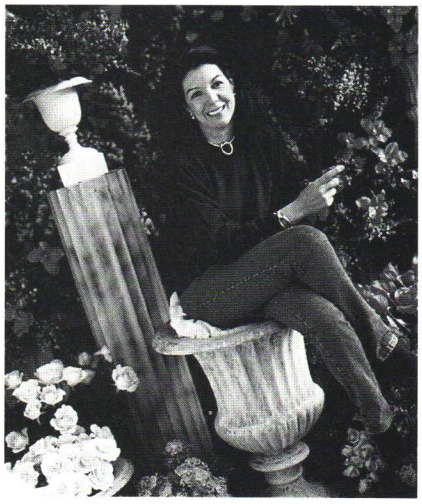
We offer "Blueprint," an architecture column by WENDY MOONAN, in which we find the best in design put to the service of making a liveable home. We also take a more elemental approach to writing about houses with "Sticks & Stones," by MICHAEL POLLAN, beginning with a meditation on windows. And for those of us who come unhinged by a hardware store, with its astonishing variety of tiny things that hold the world together, we offer JERRY ADLER's "The Turn of the Screw."



Our Design Editor Suzanne Slesin spent seventeen years as an editor and reporter at *The New York Times*. She has also produced the influential *Style Books*, including *Caribbean Style*, and *New York Style*.

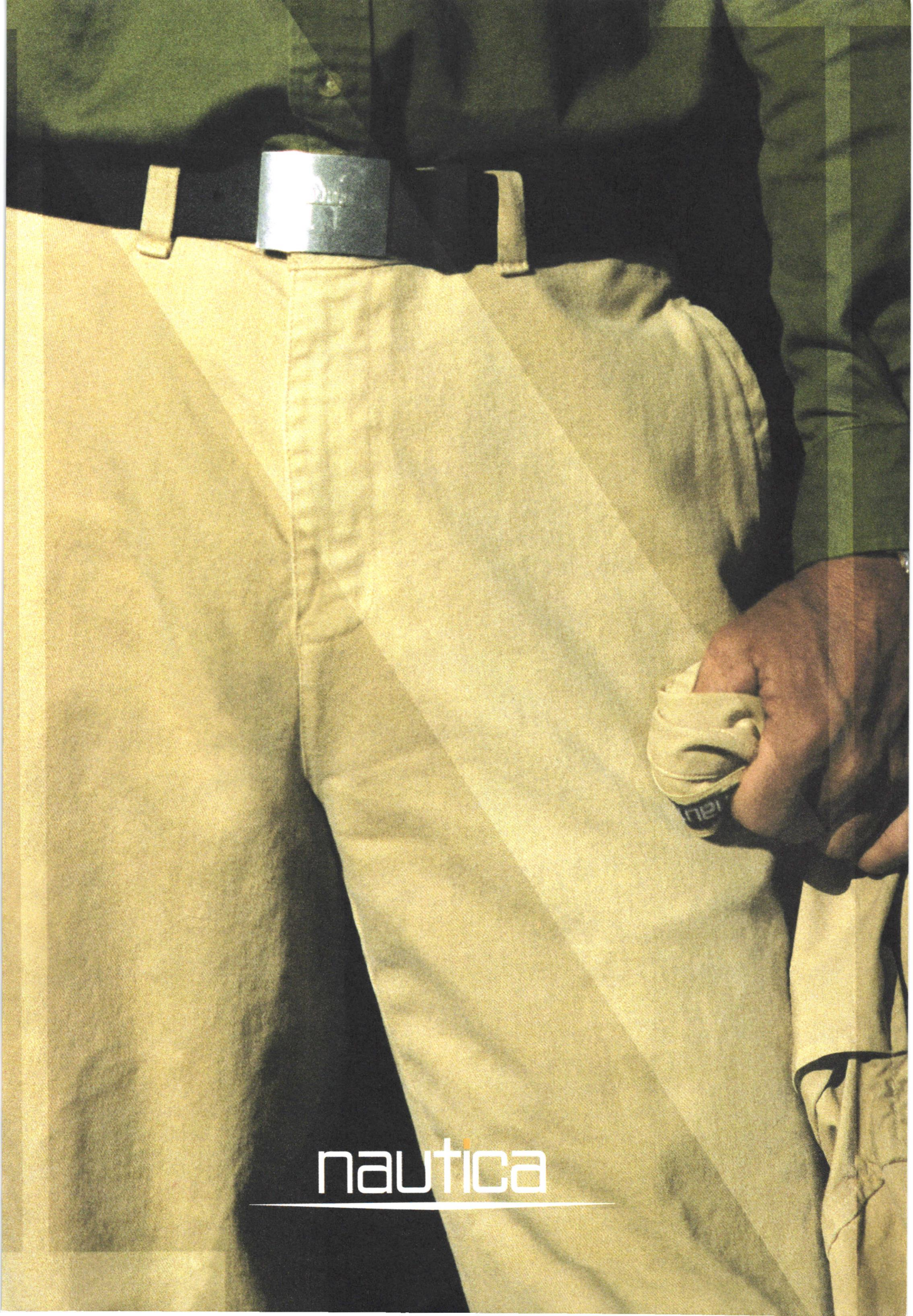


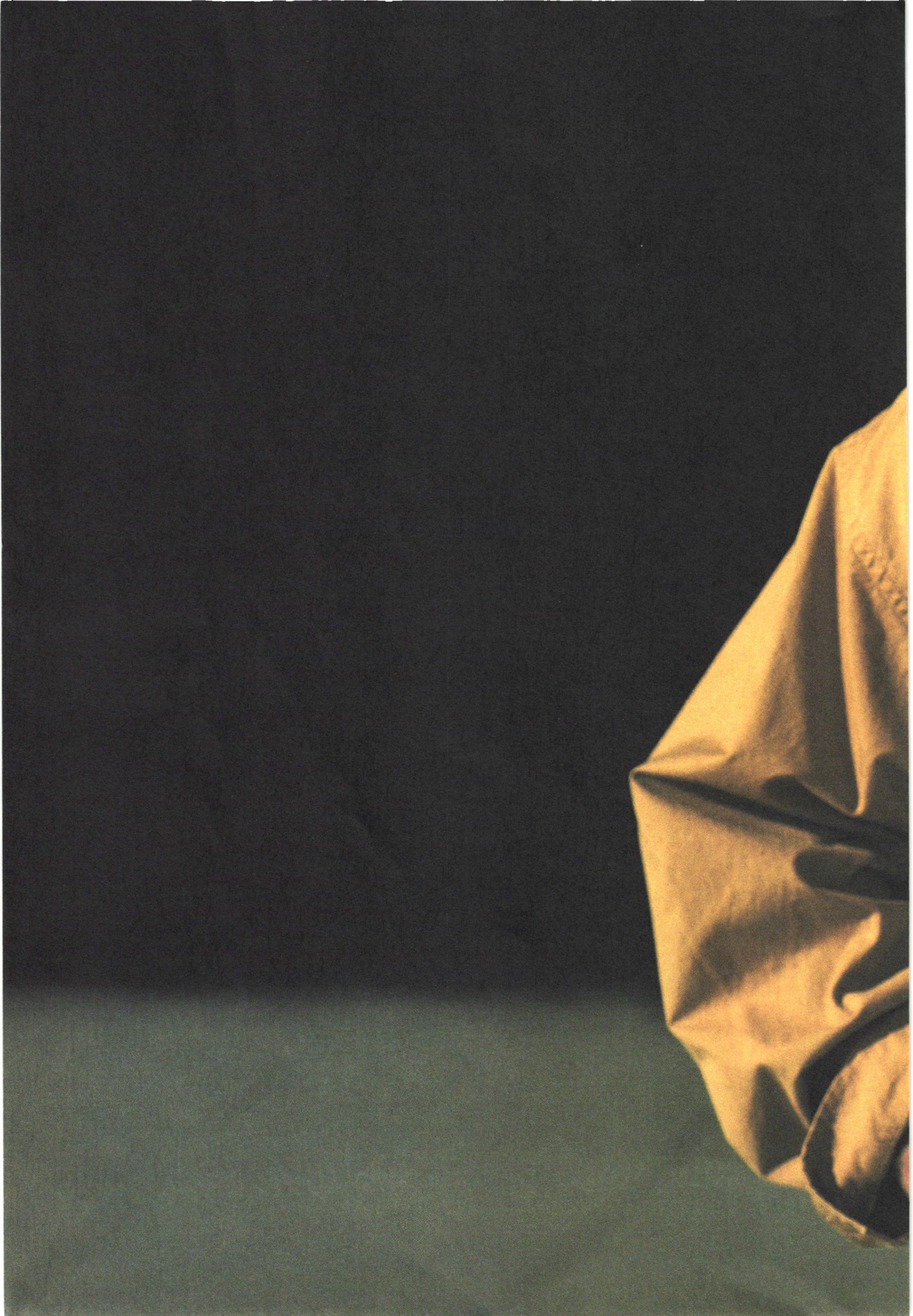
Food and Wine Editor Lora Zarubin is a self-taught chef and food stylist who ran the acclaimed Manhattan restaurant Lora. She has contributed to *The New York Times*, *Food & Wine*, and *Town & Country*.



Senga Mortimer returns as garden editor, the position she held from 1985 to 1993. The former editor of *Traditional Home*'s garden section, Mortimer is writing a book on the legendary designer Russell Page.

Cooking and entertaining return to the pages of the magazine under the leadership of LORA ZARUBIN, our food editor, and ALISON COOK, our Houston-based award-winning writer.


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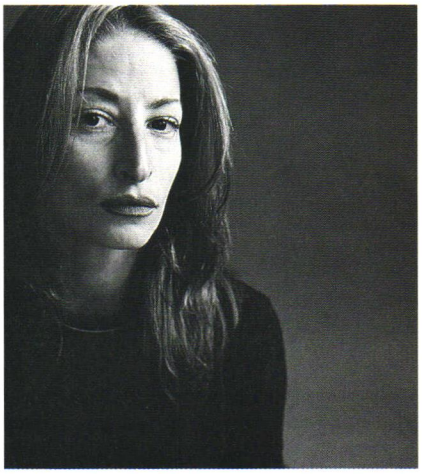





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JAY MCINERNEY uncorks a monthly wine column, "Uncorked."

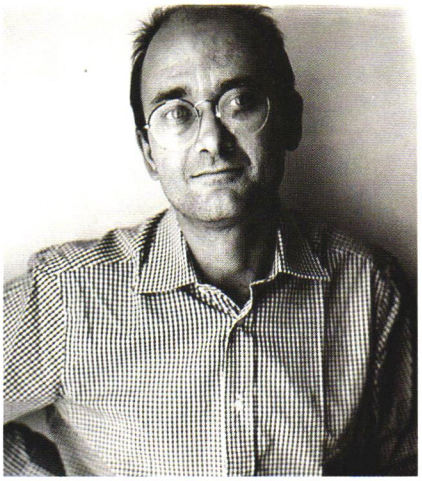
As for the poets and philosophers among us, we've revived a column from the early sixties called "Simple Things," in which the likes of Elizabeth Bowen, Marianne Moore, and Aldous Huxley wrote odes to the teakettle, the knife, and salt (respectively). There's a reason we are moved by ordinary things, and we turn to great writers to express those passions for us. We hear first from CYNTHIA OZICK on the ladle, and soon we'll hear from WILLIAM MAXWELL, EDNA O'BRIEN, and STANLEY KUNITZ. We will also take the occasional "Odyssey"—a thinking journey if you will—to explore some corner



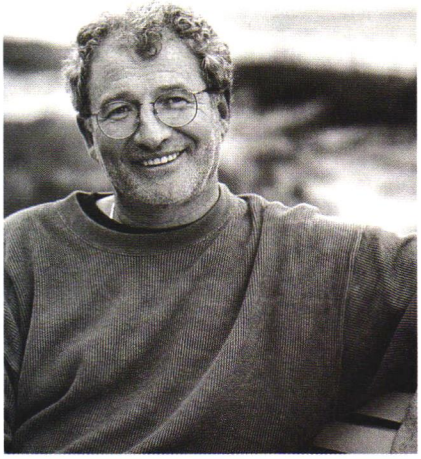
Our style editor Rory Gevis comes to us from *Mirabella*. She was a founding editor and fashion and beauty editor of *Taxi* magazine, as well as accessory director at *W*. Gevis is currently working on a children's book.

of home. JOHN UPDIKE leads the way with a meditation inspired by a JASPER JOHNS painting—and Johns gets a word in, too. And finally, from the sublimely small scale of a painting to the sublimely grand, we enter the "House of Worship." An occasional column, it explores the ways in which design arises from and expresses spiritual experience.

Inspiration in laying out the magazine has come from many sources. Our pages have a bold and beautiful new look under the leadership of Art Director ROBERT PRIEST and the talented designers in his department. You'll find a typeface created especially for us, by Jonathan Hoefler nicknamed WISTERIUS, used in most of our headlines. The color palette of the column names was inspired by wet stones collected from a Rhode Island beach during an early planning retreat. The story turning us all green comes out of the world of fashion, as does Style Editor RORY GEVIS, who produced it. Under the direction of Photo Editor DEBORAH NEEDLEMAN, we're featuring pictures by some of the world's best interior and garden photographers, among them MICHEL ARNAUD, FRANÇOIS HALARD, and CHRIS BAKER, as well as work by artists new to the world of interiors, like fashion photographer DEWEY NICKS and still-life photographer ANITA CALERO. Our cover was shot by still-life photographer ILAN RUBIN and produced by JEFFREY W. MILLER, whose work will appear in issues to come. The contributions of these people do not exist in isolation; like a house, a magazine is a collaboration of many talents.



François Halard contributes fashion and interior photography to *French Vogue, Vanity Fair, Interview,* and *World of Interiors*. His exhibitions include a one-man show at the Façade Gallery in New York City.



Michel Arnaud established his reputation as a photographer of architecture, interiors, and fashion. His work has appeared in *British Vogue, Town & Country, The New York Times Magazine,* and London's *Sunday Times*.

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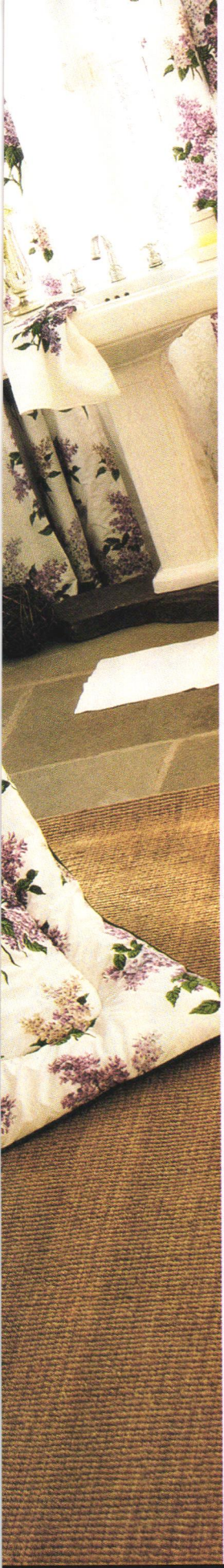
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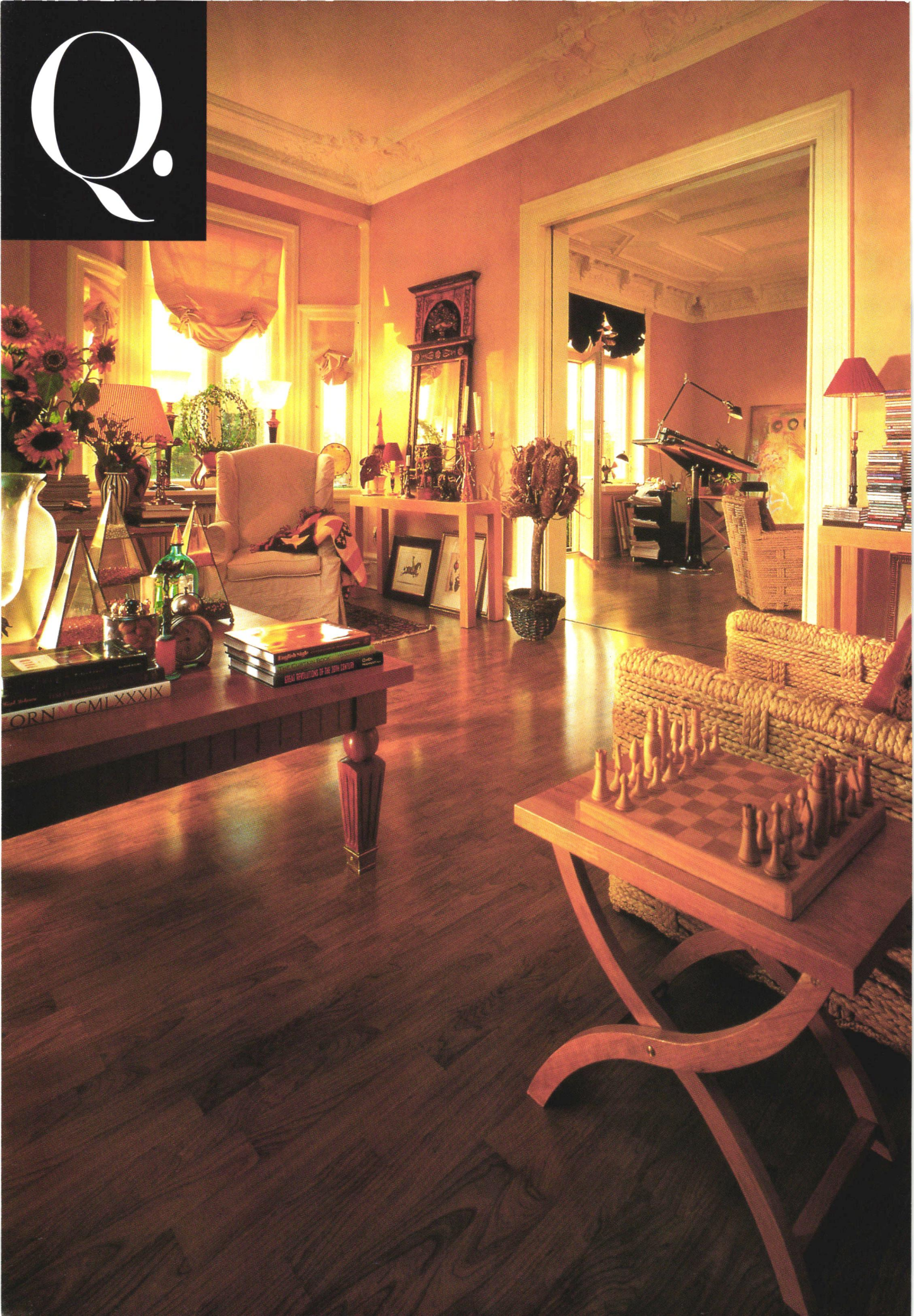
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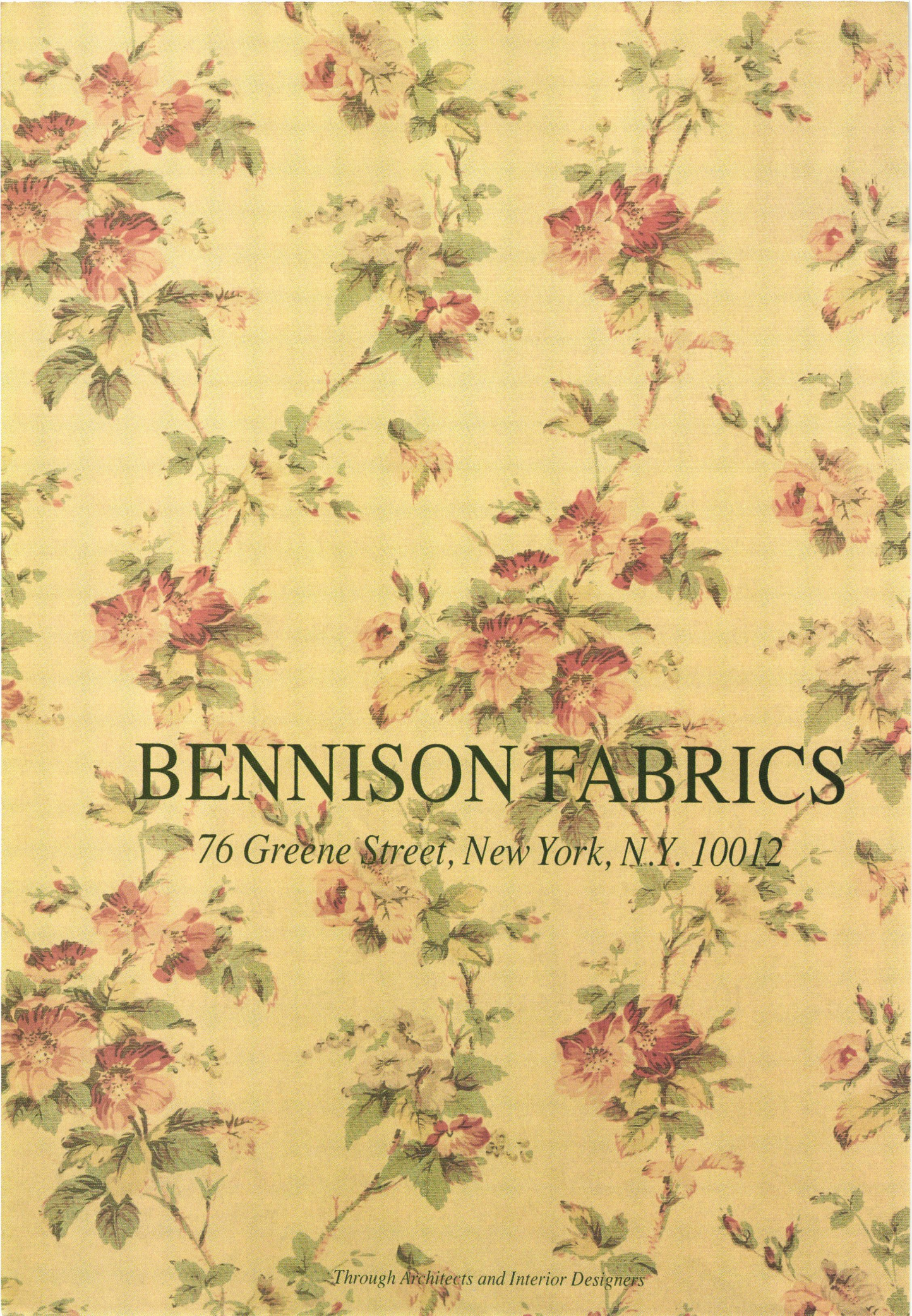
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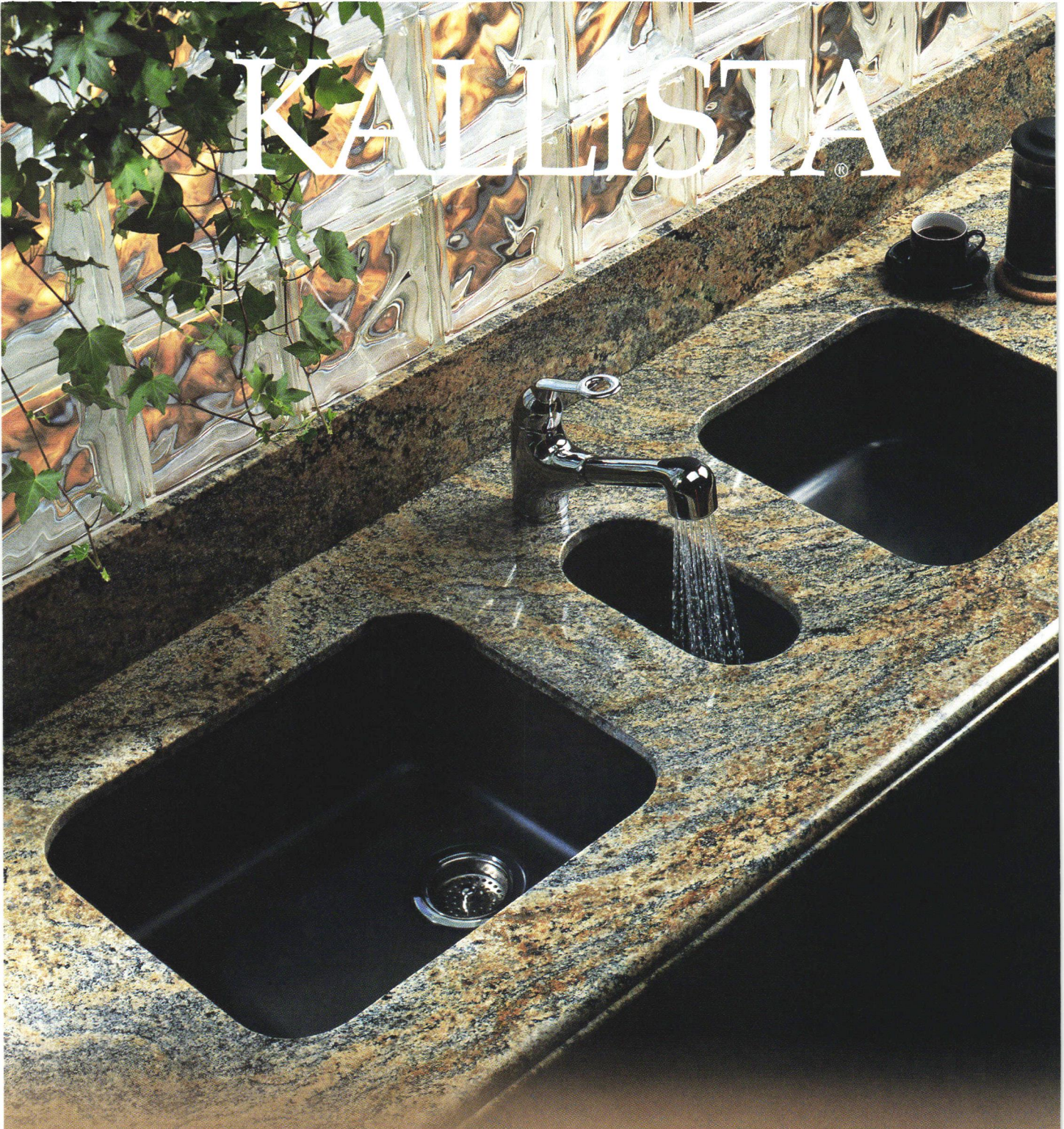


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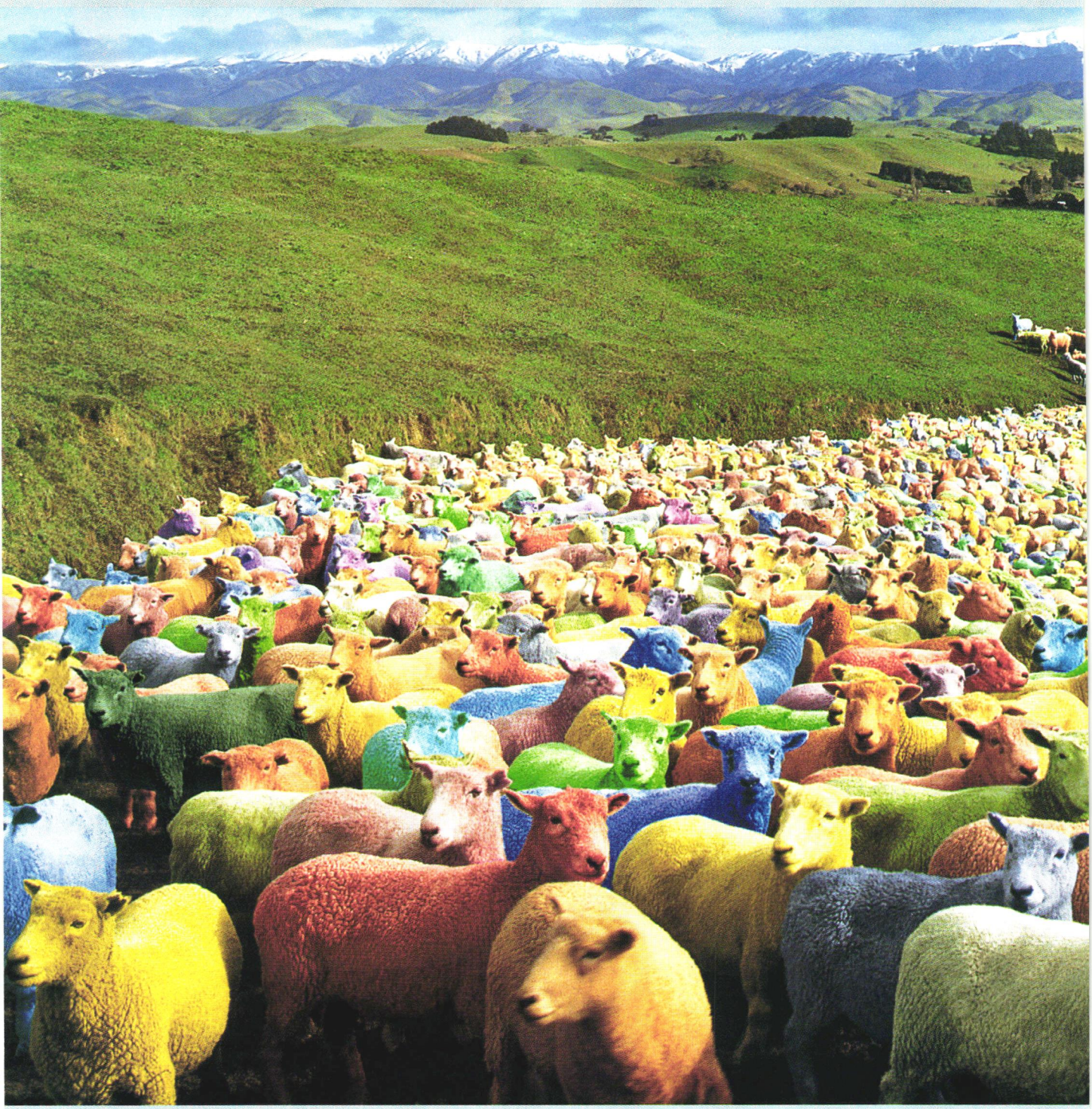
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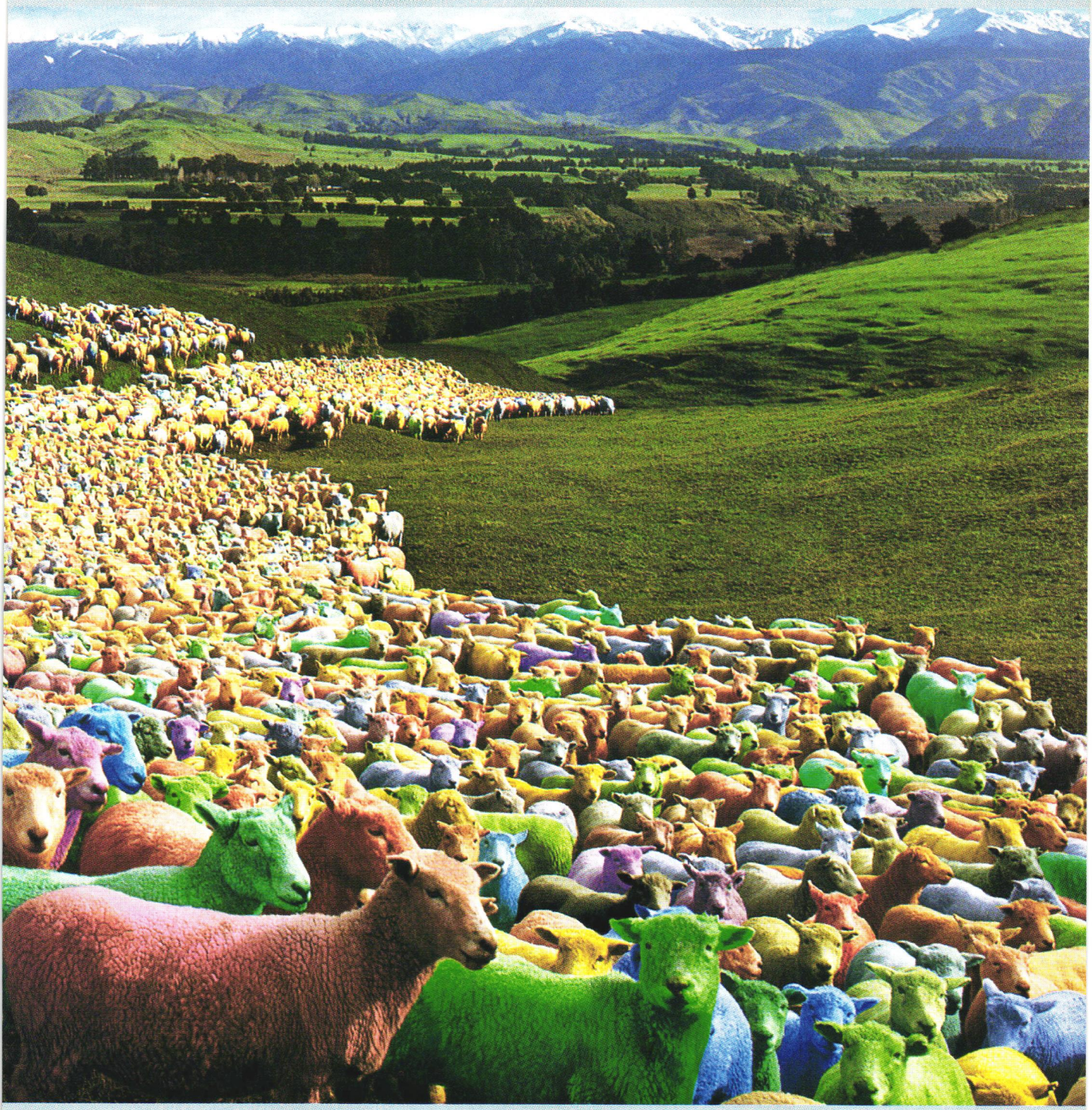
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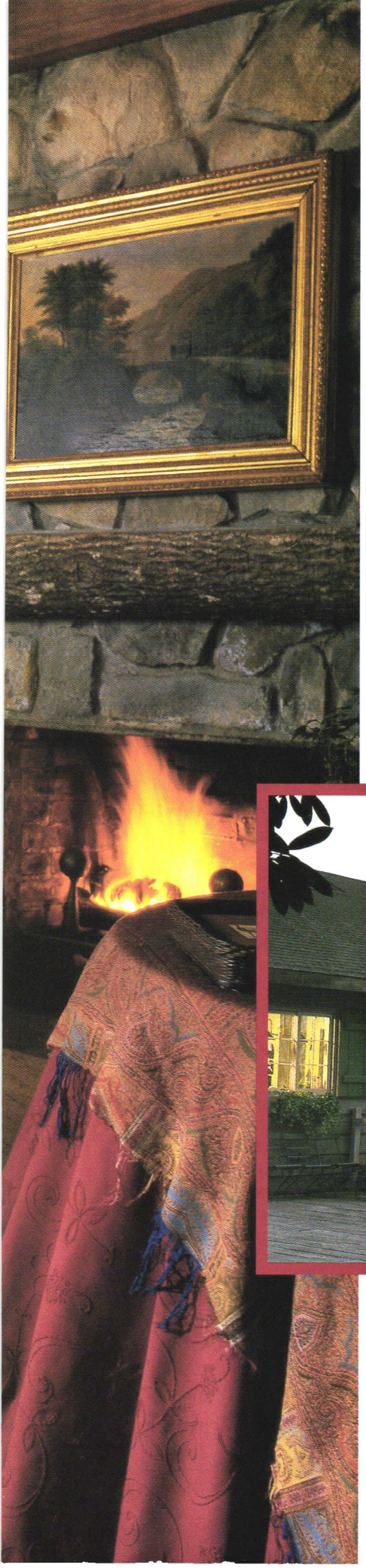
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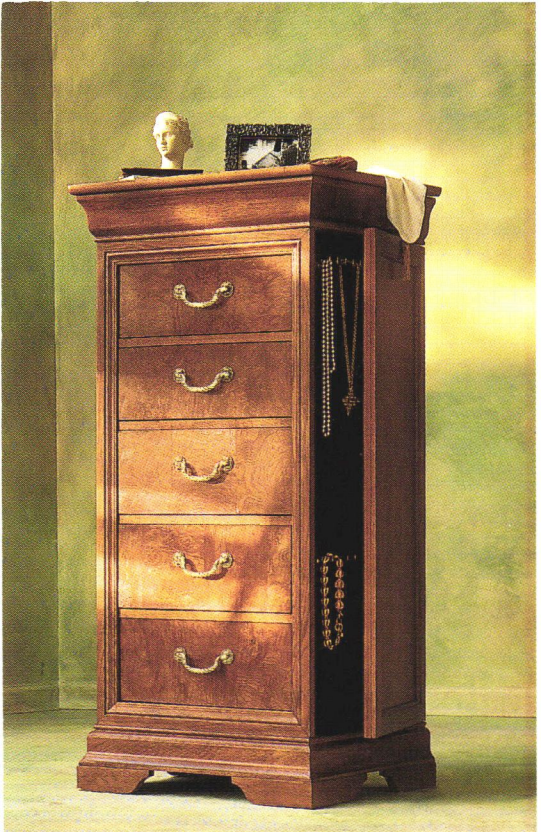
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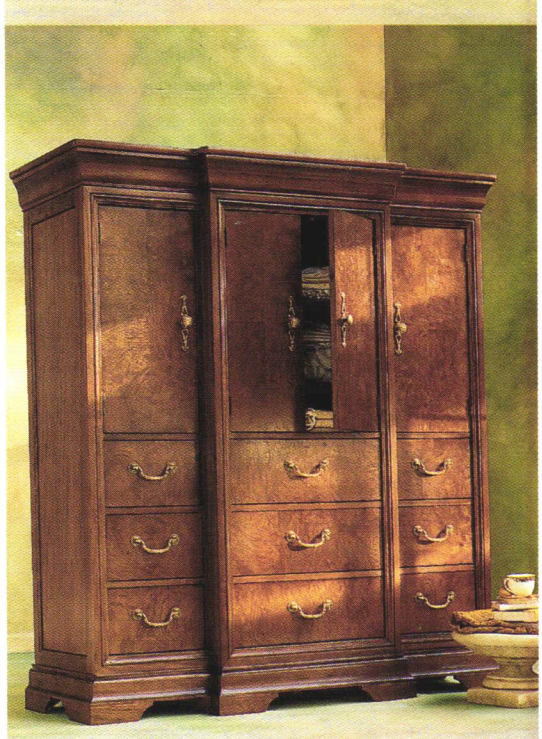
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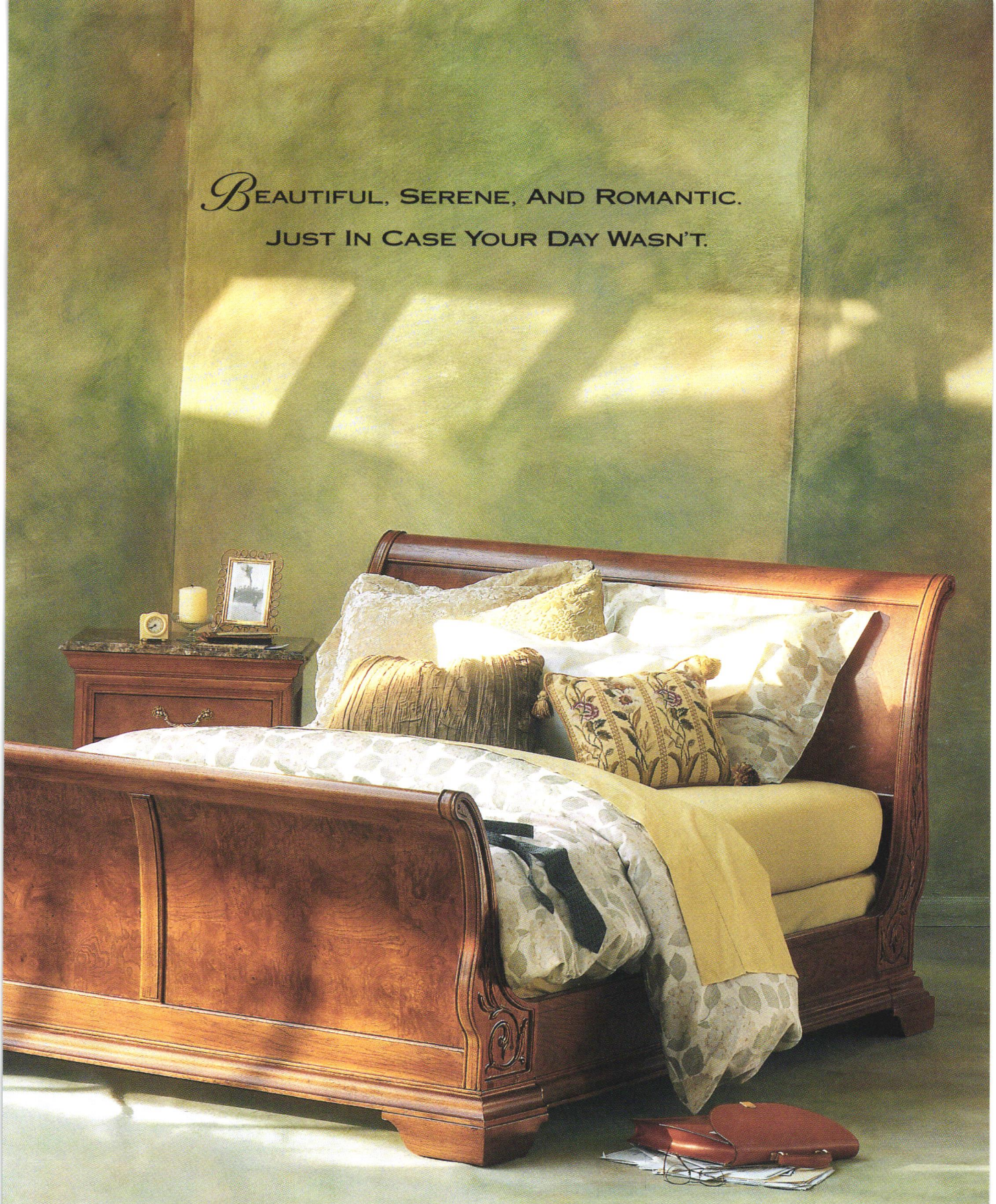
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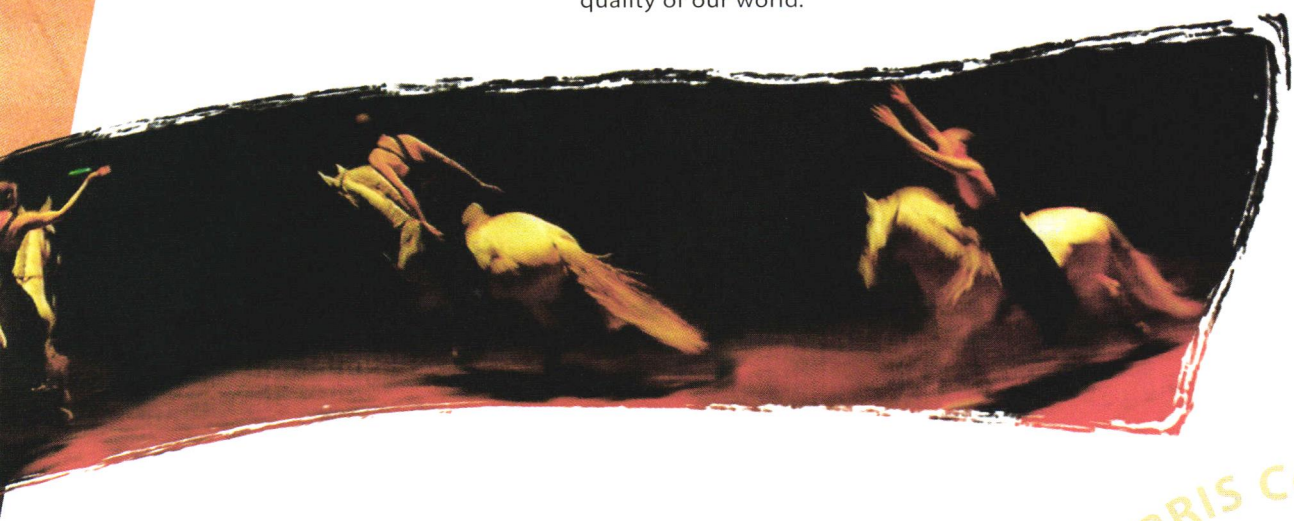
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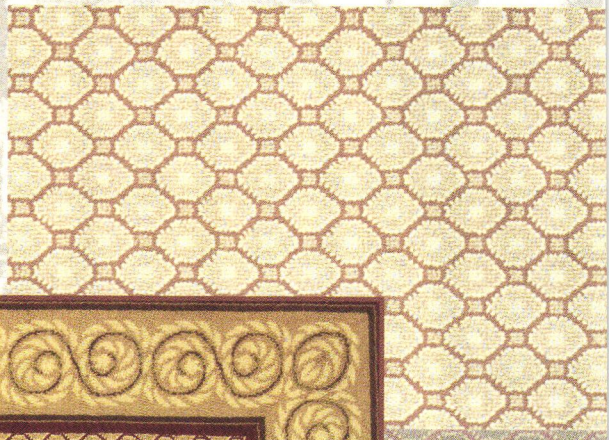
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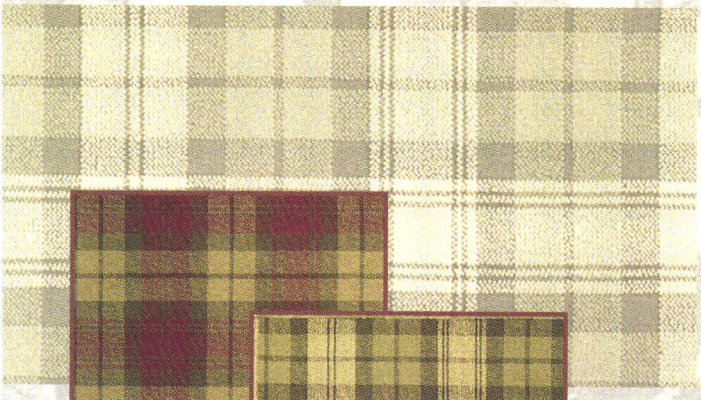
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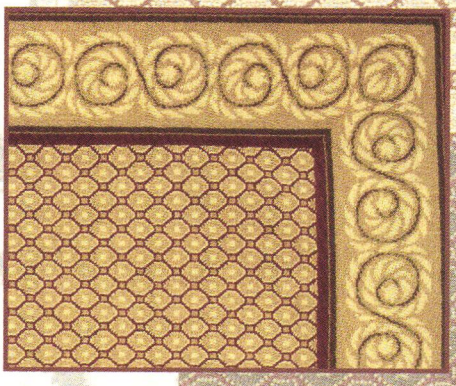
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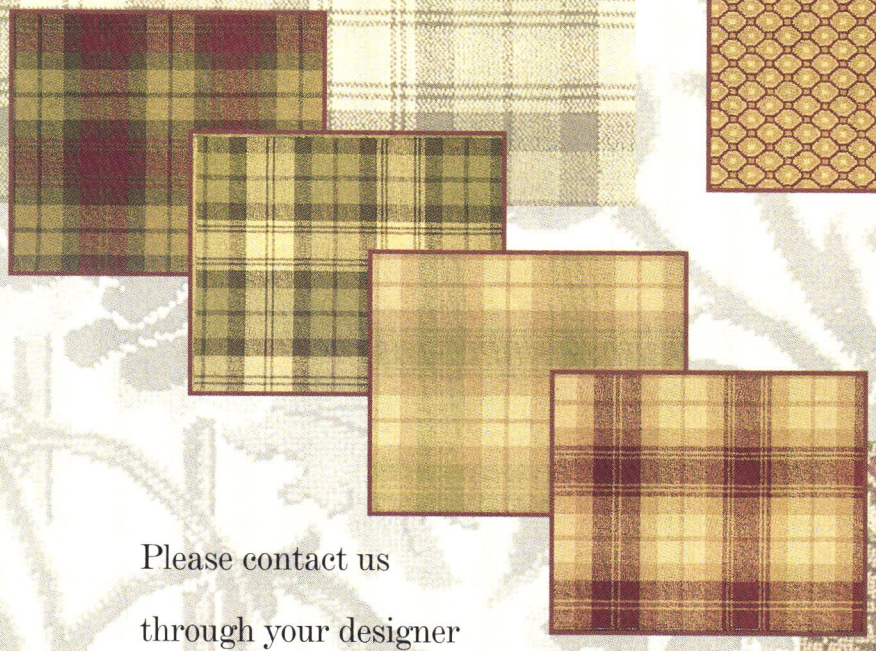


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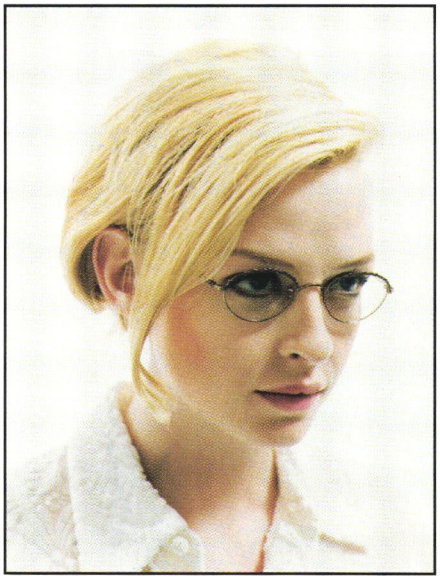
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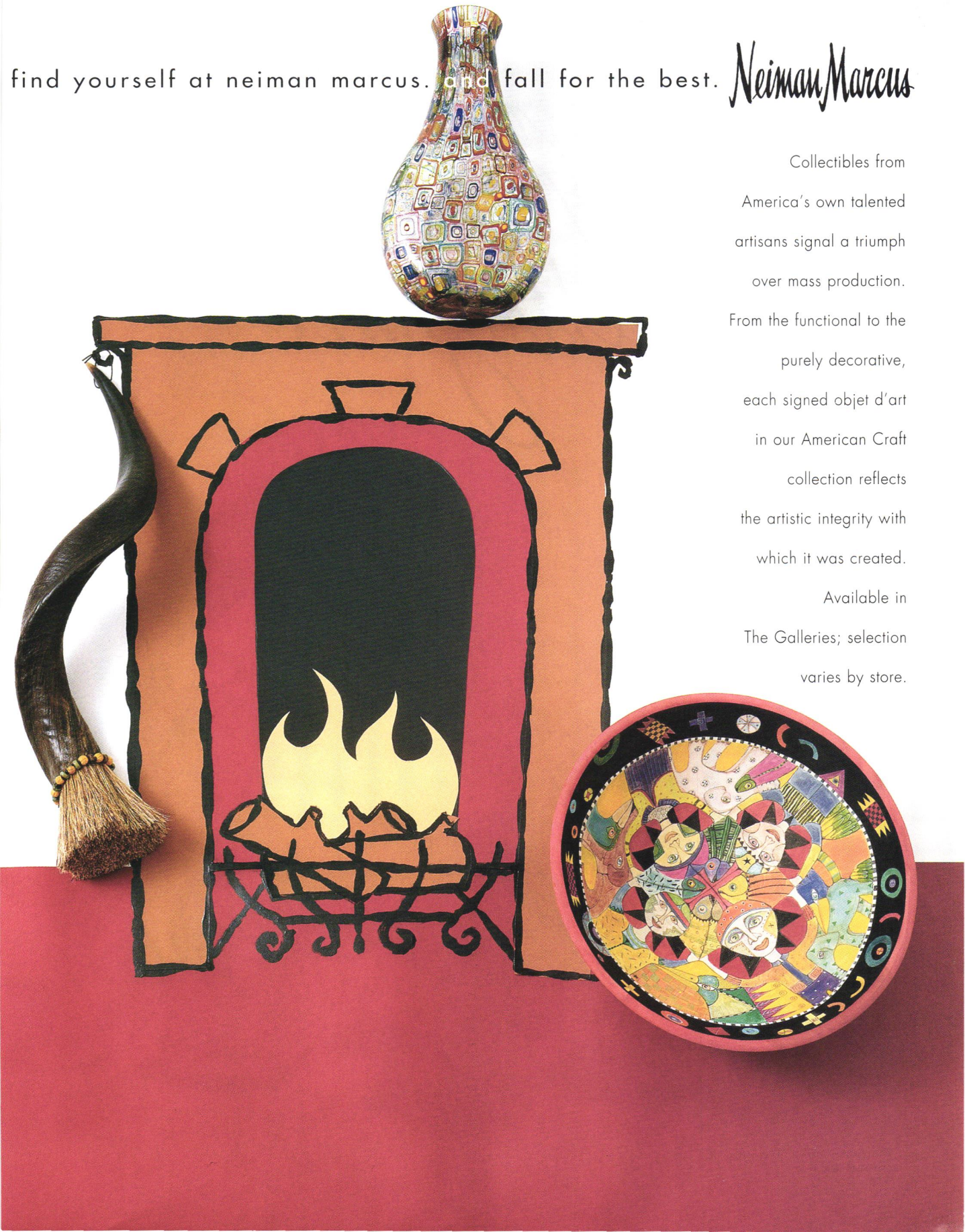
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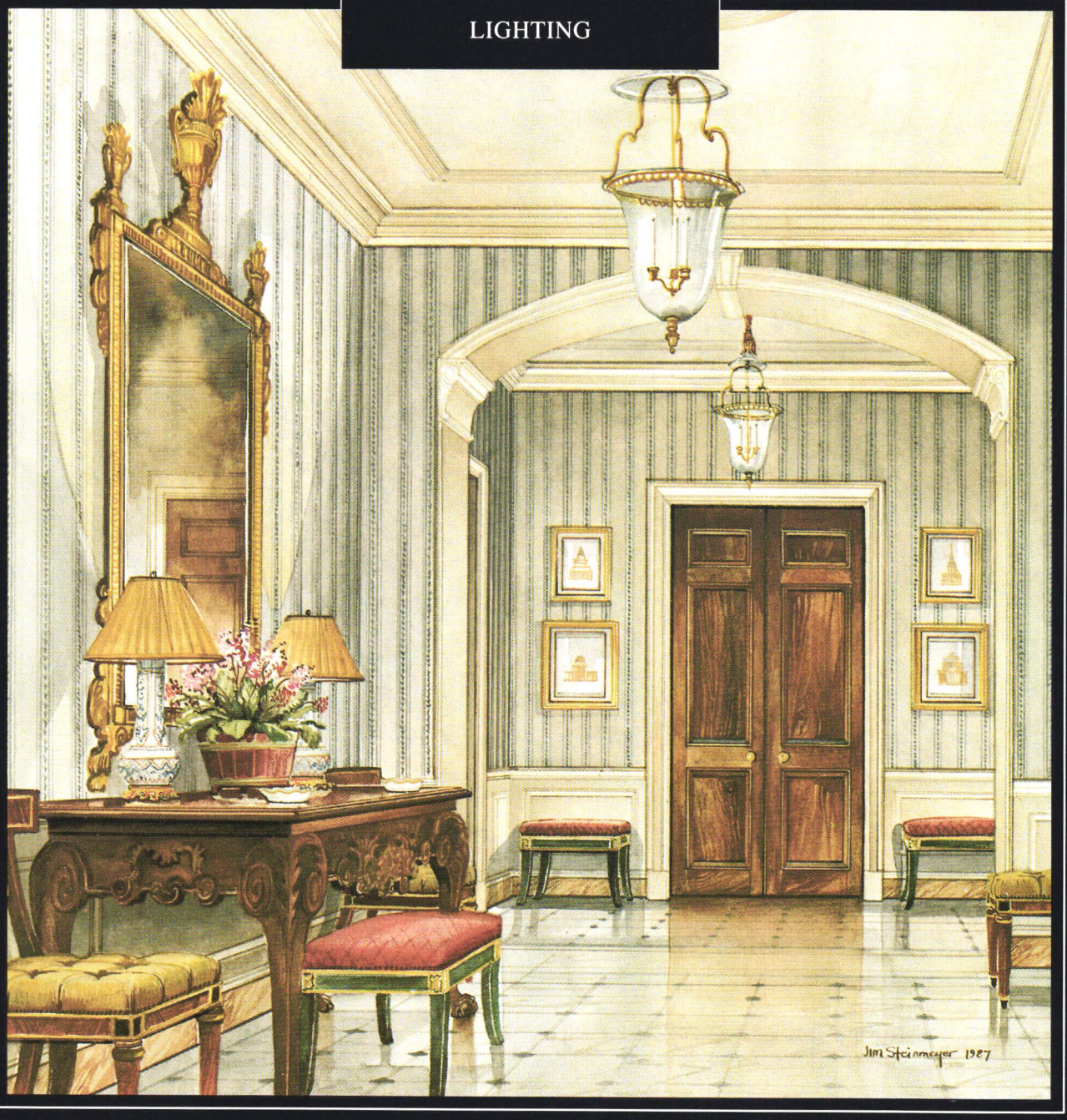
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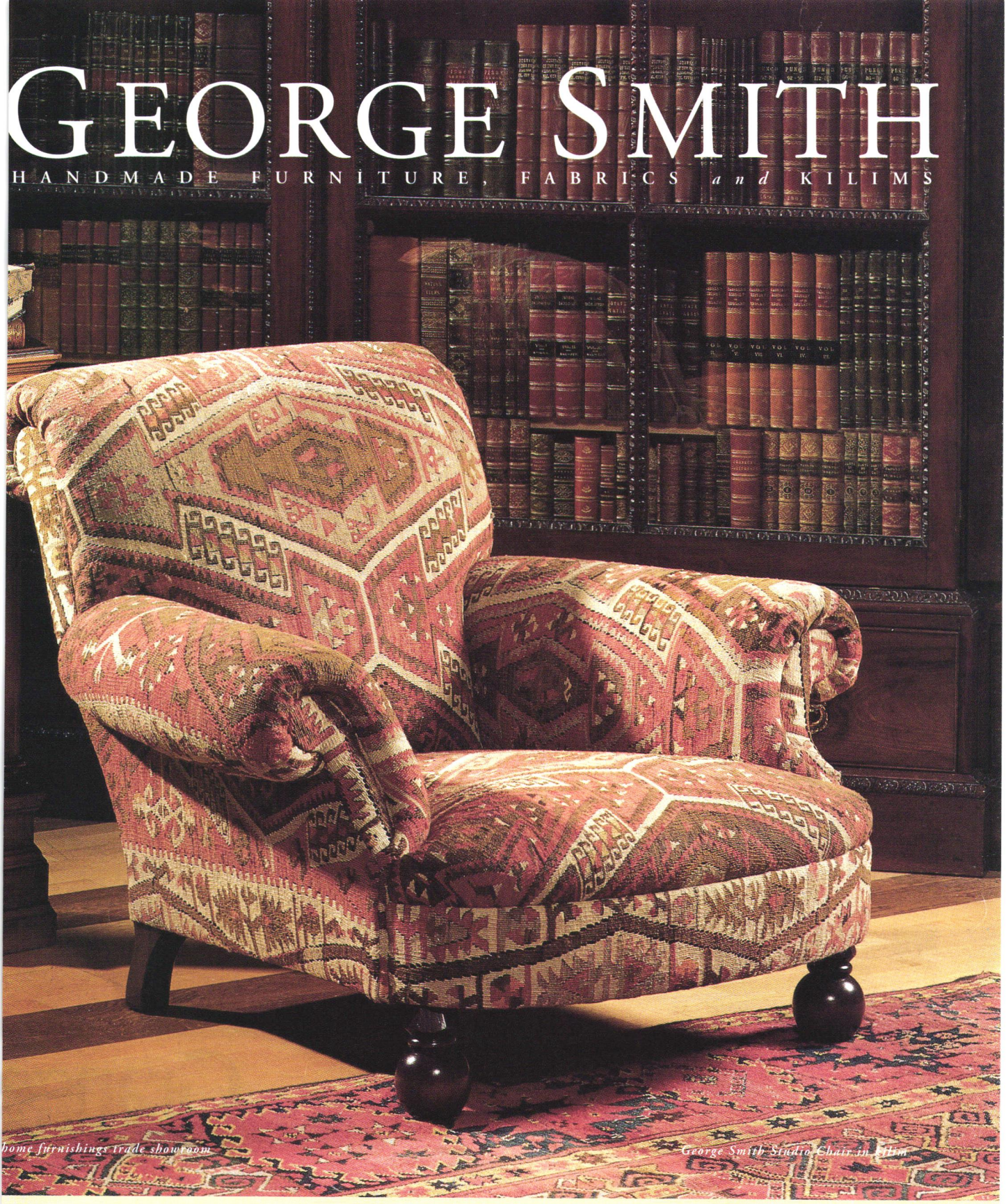
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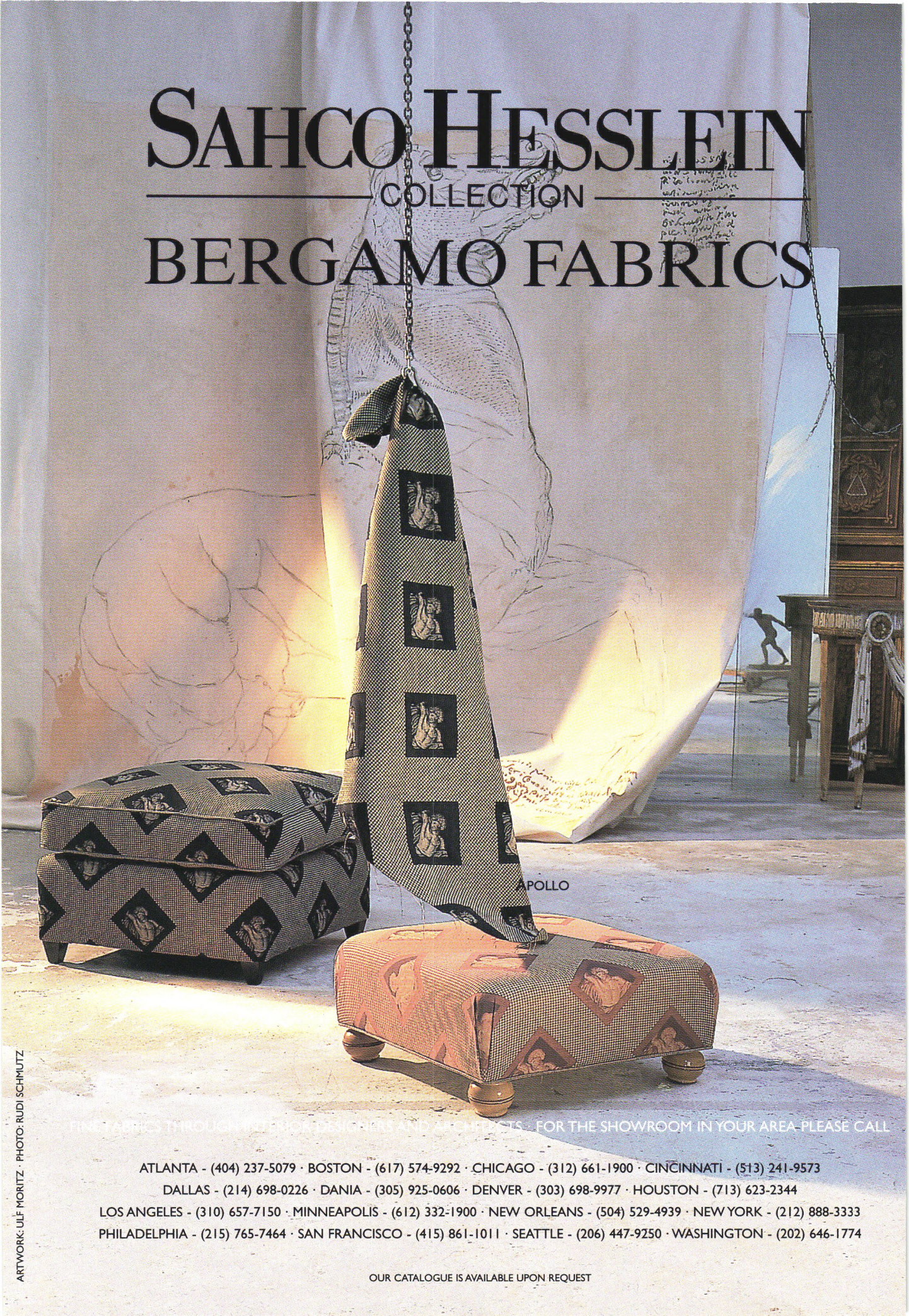
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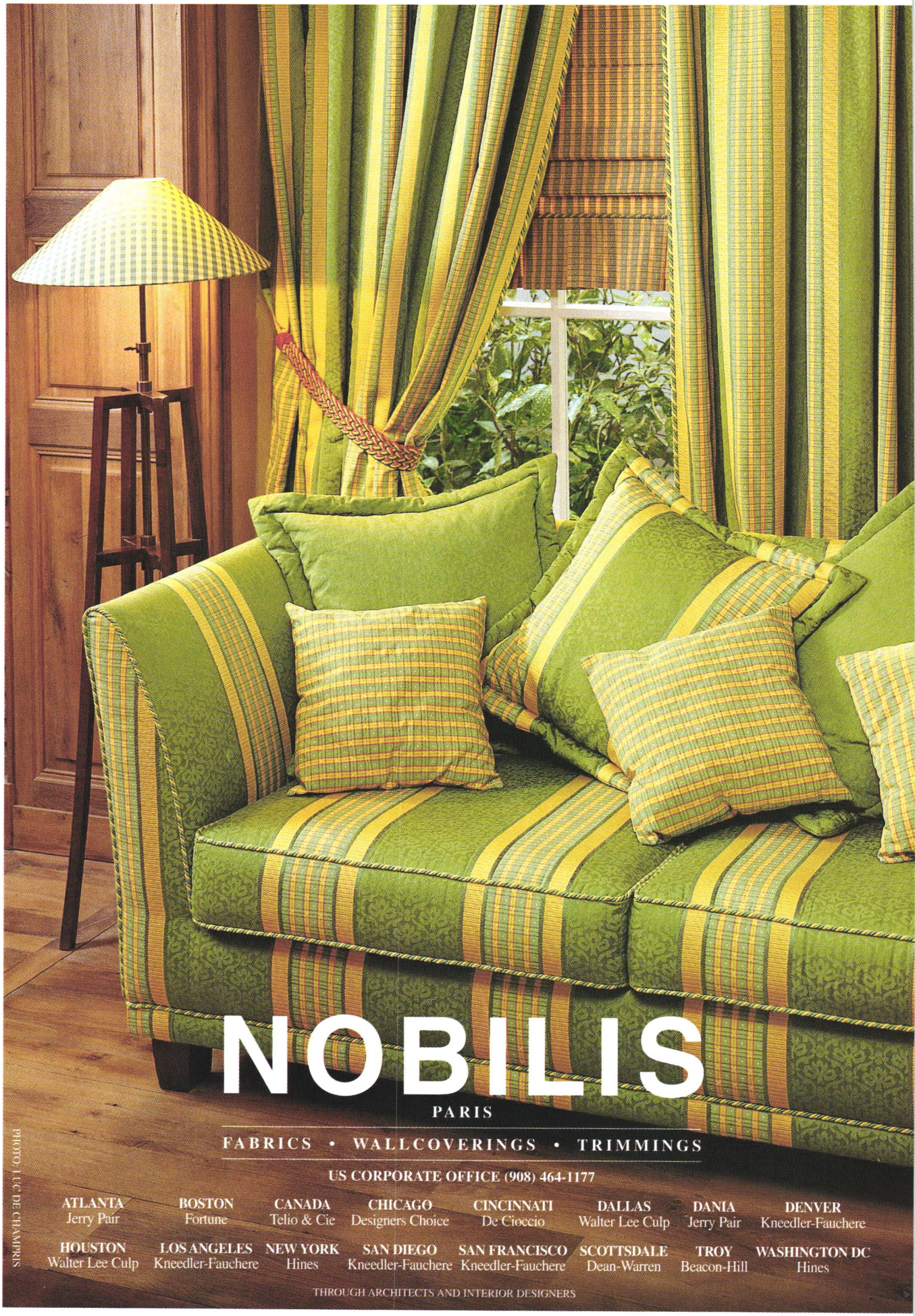
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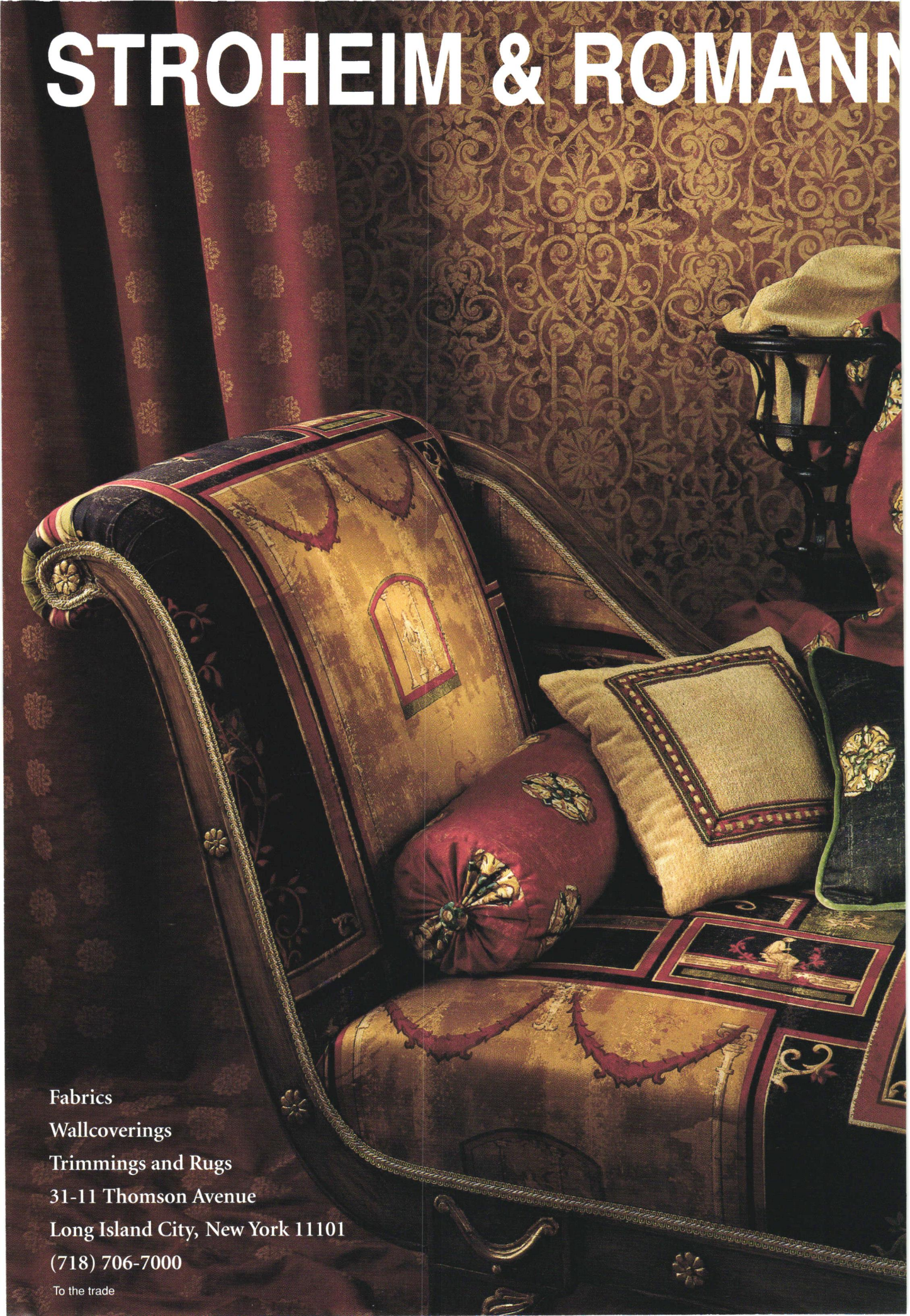
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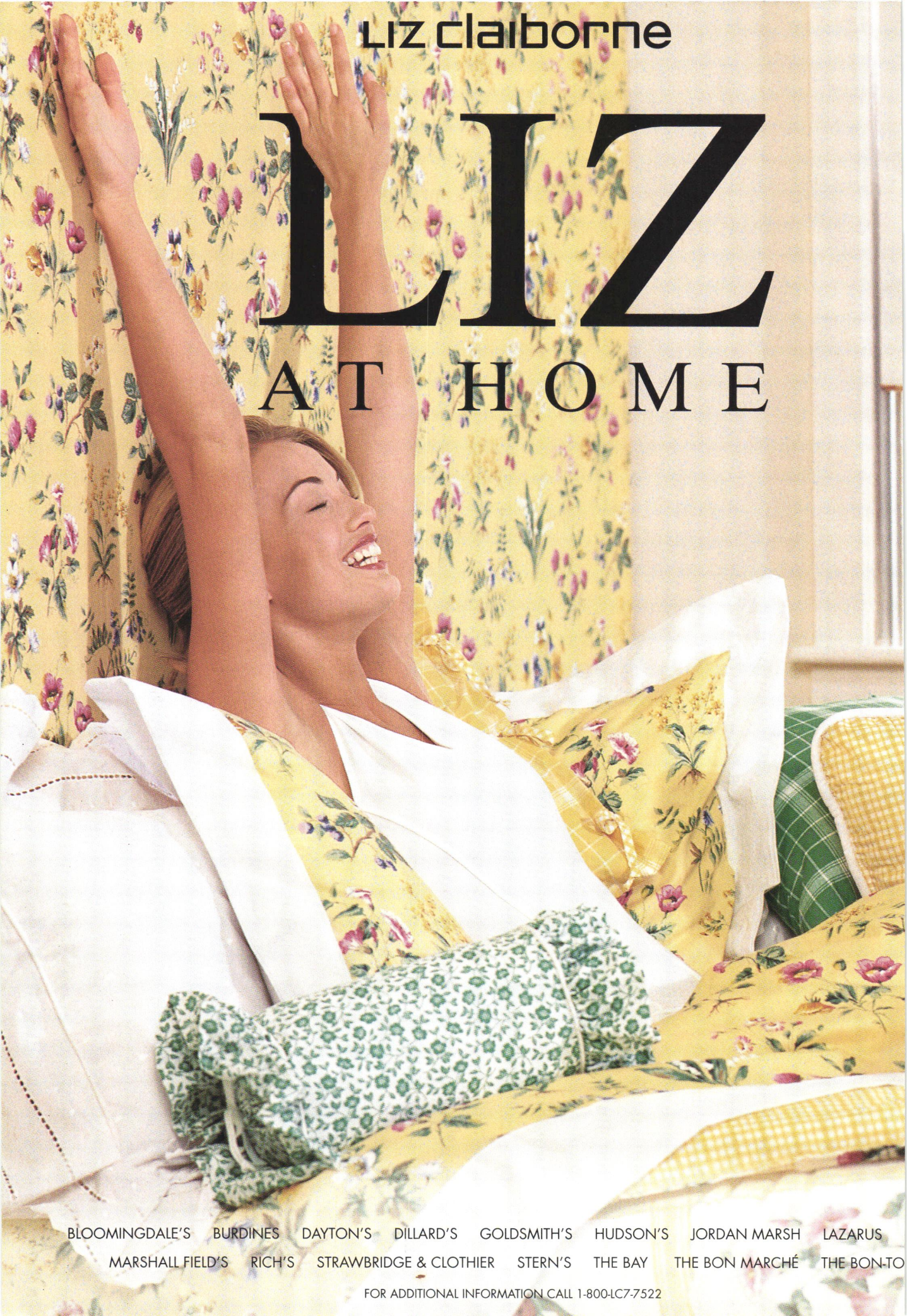
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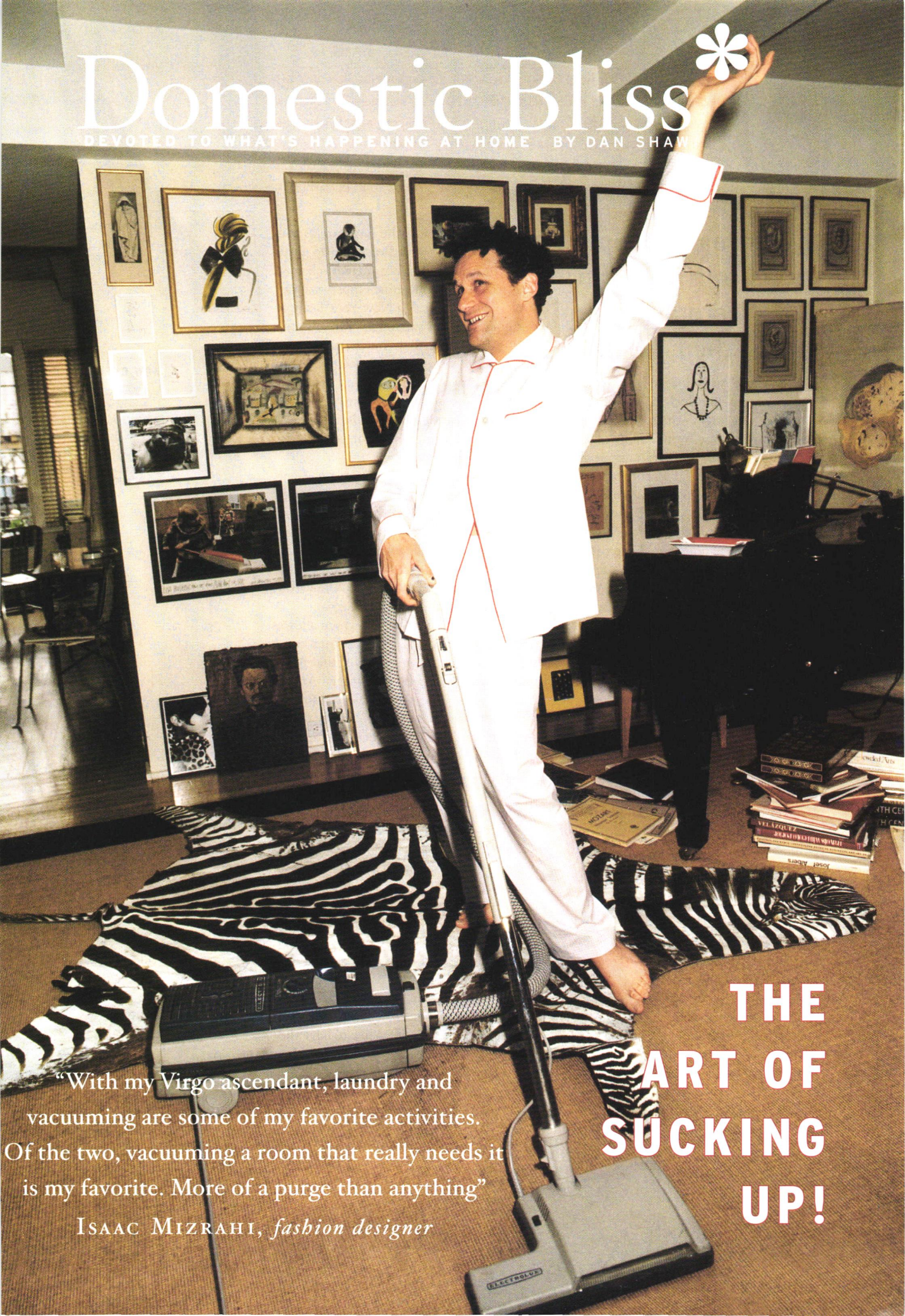
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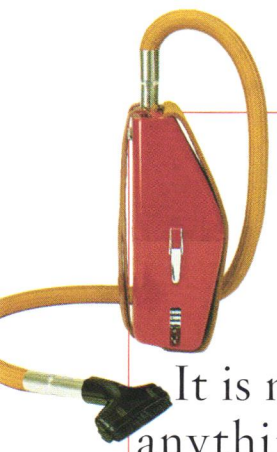
DEVOTED TO WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOME BY DAN SHAW



THE ART OF SUCKING UP!

"With my Virgo ascendant, laundry and vacuuming are some of my favorite activities. Of the two, vacuuming a room that really needs it is my favorite. More of a purge than anything"

ISAAC MIZRAHI, *fashion designer*



MUSEUM PIECES There are three vacuums in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York: a 1956 red plastic rendition, left, from Italy, designed by Achille Castiglioni and Pier Giacomo; a 1953 vacuum by Giuseppe de Goetzen, which was given to the museum by Philip Johnson; the lone American vacuum, designed in 1981 by Michael S. Cousins and John Lonczak for cleaning car interiors, was manufactured by Dynamic Classics Ltd., of New York, which stopped producing it several years ago.

It is many people's anything-but-dirty little secret: vacuuming is their *pleasure.*

While those who loathe any form of housekeeping are legion, members of a silent majority—their voices until now drowned out by the hum of their Hoovers—are coming clean about their passion to vacuum. That corporate vice presidents with full-time maids and ladies who lunch actually vacuum may sound absurd initially. But consider vacuuming's incomparability: no other chore can dramatically enhance your home's appearance so quickly and efficiently. Perhaps that's why Americans buy so many vacuum cleaners and use them so often, frequently developing inexplicable attachments to, well, their attachments.

"I love vacuuming," says Doris Leslie Blau, doyenne of New York's antique-rug dealers. Though she regularly uses a manual carpet sweeper on the rugs in her apartment (and gives her clients a Fuller brush carpet sweeper with every purchase), she delights in pulling out her Hoover once a month. "It's quite therapeutic," she says. "I like the motion of going back and forth. It's not a little task. The motions are *big*. Dusting is *small*. I hate dusting."

Attitudes toward vacuuming and its paraphernalia can signify character ticks or neuroses. Lee Bogart, a decorator in Locust Valley, Long Island, insists on using an upright, while her housekeeper will use only a canister. "If you're not careful with the canister, you nick the furniture as you drag it around," says Bogart, who puts drops of lemon oil in her vacuum-cleaner bags to offset the machine's musty odors.

Kenneth Richard, a New York fashion designer, likes all vacuums: "I love vacuuming because it's so much more efficient than sweeping." He vacuums his workspace two or three times a day. "We have two dogs and two cats and if you are a designer wearing black all the time, you have to keep things clean or you'll look like a lint ball," he says.

After Nick Dolin, an associate producer at HBO Sports, and Liz Arlen, a writer, bought a 9 foot by 11 foot Art Deco Chinese rug for their apartment, he turned into a vacuuming fanatic. "I couldn't care less about how the rest of the house looks. As long as there are no foreign particles on my rug I can sleep at night," he says.

Therapeutic vacuuming—which allows one to burn off steam and calories constructively—can backfire. In the 1989 movie *sex, lies, and videotape*, Andie MacDowell's character, a neglected southern housewife, vacuums ferociously when she's furious with her husband. After the machine jams in her bedroom, she discovers an earring that isn't hers in the power nozzle, confirming her suspicions that her husband has been cheating on her.

When James LaForce, a partner in a New York public relations agency, describes vacuuming, it sounds almost transcendental. "It's peaceful," he says. "You can't hear anything else. You look down and focus on the floor. And there's a very definite beginning and end. You could dust all day and never be done. With vacuuming, you basically know when you're finished." What's more, there's tangible proof of a job well done. "I like to have the patterns on the carpet," says LaForce. "It's like a freshly mowed lawn. I like all the tracks to be in the same direction."

The iconography *(continued on page 82)*

HOW MANY WE BOUGHT

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1980	7.4 million

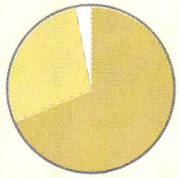
Source: Vacuum Cleaner Manufacturers Association, North Canton, Ohio

HOW OFTEN WE DO IT

4.9%	more than once a day
11.9%	once a day
37.1%	more than once a week
30.9%	once a week
2.5%	once a month

Source: Carpet and Rug Institute, Dalton, Georgia

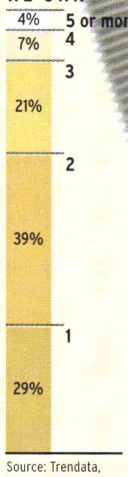
WHAT WE USE



68% Uprights
28% Canister
3% Stick

Source: The Hoover Company, North Canton, Ohio.

HOW MANY WE OWN



Source: Trendata, Norwalk, Connecticut

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"When my Coke cans filled with cigarette ashes fall, I Dustbust them"

MARCI KLEIN, associate producer, *Saturday Night Live*

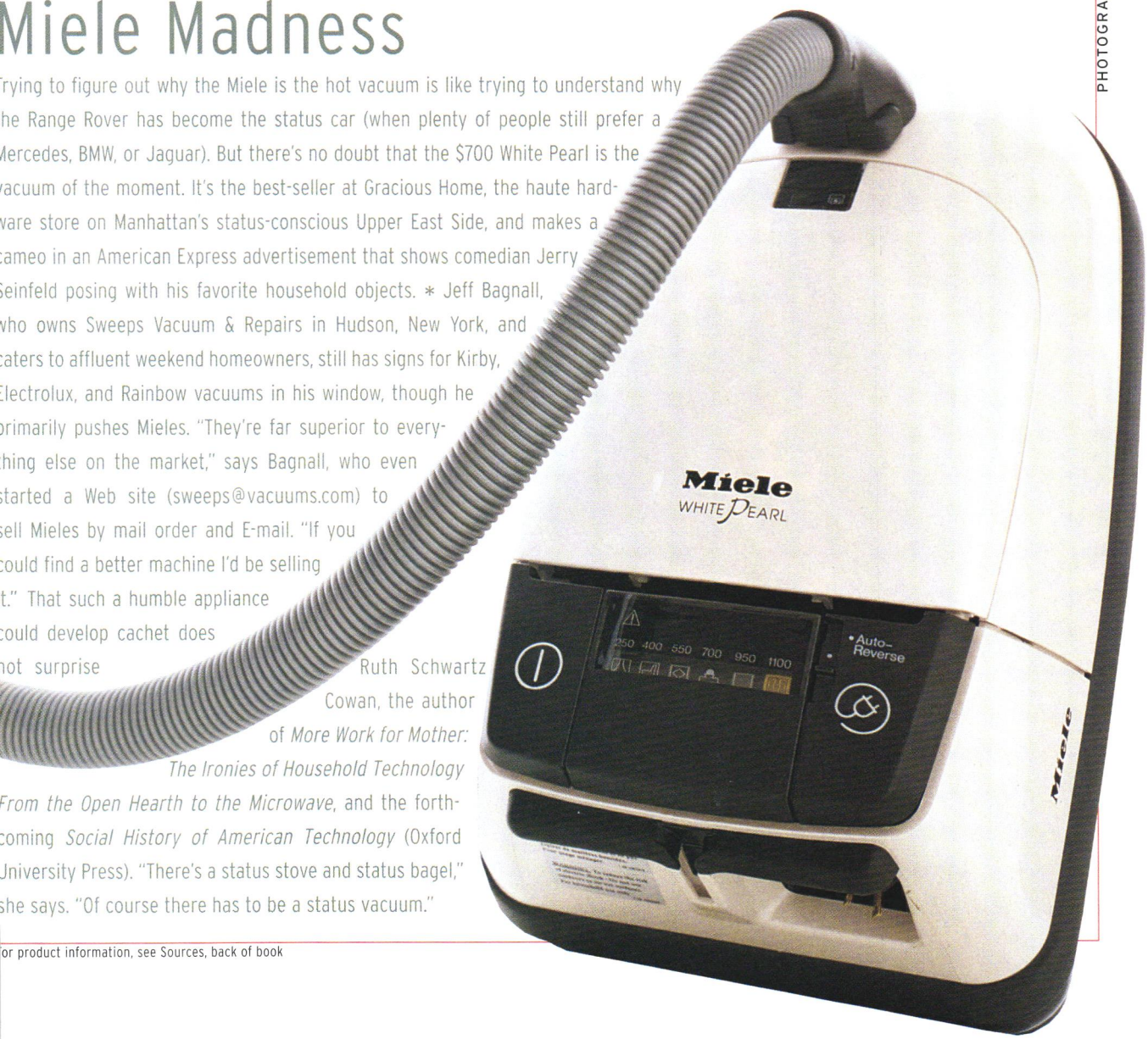
Do You Vacuum?

"No, no, no. I have a full-time housekeeper. I think she does it every day she's so compulsive. She likes vacuuming. If she saw me vacuuming, I think she'd quit"

JUDITH KRANTZ, novelist

Miele Madness

Trying to figure out why the Miele is the hot vacuum is like trying to understand why the Range Rover has become the status car (when plenty of people still prefer a Mercedes, BMW, or Jaguar). But there's no doubt that the $700 White Pearl is the vacuum of the moment. It's the best-seller at Gracious Home, the haute hardware store on Manhattan's status-conscious Upper East Side, and makes a cameo in an American Express advertisement that shows comedian Jerry Seinfeld posing with his favorite household objects. * Jeff Bagnall, who owns Sweeps Vacuum & Repairs in Hudson, New York, and caters to affluent weekend homeowners, still has signs for Kirby, Electrolux, and Rainbow vacuums in his window, though he primarily pushes Mieles. "They're far superior to everything else on the market," says Bagnall, who even started a Web site (sweeps@vacuums.com) to sell Mieles by mail order and E-mail. "If you could find a better machine I'd be selling it." That such a humble appliance could develop cachet does not surprise Ruth Schwartz Cowan, the author of *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology From the Open Hearth to the Microwave*, and the forthcoming *Social History of American Technology* (Oxford University Press). "There's a status stove and status bagel," she says. "Of course there has to be a status vacuum."

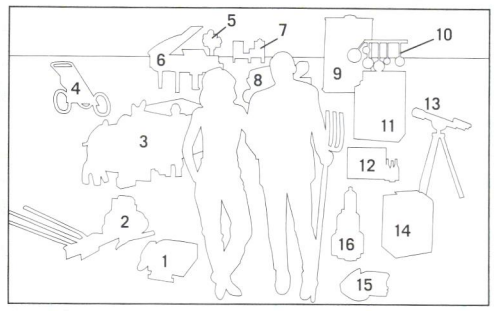


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CARDMEMBERS GO SHOPPING

JAMES CARVILLE
MARY MATALIN

{*Political strategists, writers, lovebirds*}

Mary and James, let's just say, don't always see eye to eye. One thing they do agree on, however, is the American Express® Card. That's because the Card is welcomed at all kinds of places, for everything from paper shredders to stuffed animals. (A donkey or elephant, perchance?)

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of the just-vacuumed carpet is essentially American, according to Marietta L. Baba, a professor of cultural anthropology at Wayne State University in Detroit and a consultant to Whirlpool. "People feel compelled to vacuum all the time to maintain a middle-class standard of living," Baba says. "If your home is dirty, people talk about you. Even people who don't know you!"

Immediate gratification is what hooked Diana Lyne, senior vice president of marketing for Tiffany & Co., who calls vacuuming "total therapy." Lyne's infatuation began when she replaced her Electrolux with a Miele. "It's awesome," she says. "It's a great machine. I don't get into cars, which may explain why I love this vacuum so much." Though Lyne's husband, Ken Aretsky, thinks her passion is excessive, they are now a three-Miele family: Lyne bought one for their country house, one for their apartment, and one for Aretsky's Manhattan restaurant, Butterfield 81. "People who own them love them," she says. "We're a small group. It's like a fan club."

If owning a Miele is like belonging to a fan club, then buying an Electrolux is like joining a country club with an $899 initiation fee. "I felt like I had arrived at real adulthood when I got my Electrolux," says Nancy Marx Better, a writer and mother of two young boys, who lives in Greenwich, Connecticut. "Having Electrolux come to the house is a great American tradition. They even bring free bags when they make a service call."

Suellen Hoy, who teaches history at the University of Notre Dame and wrote *Chasing Dirt: The American Pursuit of Cleanliness*, believes that a freshly vacuumed carpet is a true symbol of graciousness. "My husband always vacuums before guests come over," she says.

That's nothing compared to actress Jane Powell's husband, Dick Moore, who makes a clean sweep of it almost every day—and keeps fourteen vacuums at their house in Wilton, Connecticut. "That includes the garage, the basement, the pool house, and the toolshed, and some of them are Dustbusters, which don't really count," Moore anxiously explains. "We have dogs and the house gets dirty, but we don't like having help. Janie does most of the cooking so I do the vacuuming. I'm not a vacuum-cleaner nut. I don't like carrying them around, so I like to have one wherever I go. But I don't live my life in order to vacuum."

THE FIRST THING I SEE WHEN I OPEN MY EYES?

"The art in my bedroom. It is *so* important since I am constantly looking, and if the paintings and objects are not profound and inspiring, it all becomes boring, mundane, and eventually tiresome.

Kim MacConnel has painted my old Sony TV cabinet in the most witty, intelligent, and beautiful way, and since the TV at my house is *always* on, it's really like this fireplace which gives off light, amusement, and comfort day and night. Everything is alive and energetic and continues to reassure that each day is a blessing to enjoy, in spite of the disasters on TV and elsewhere."

HOLLY SOLOMON, *art dealer*



PHOTOGRAPH BY RON FREEMAN

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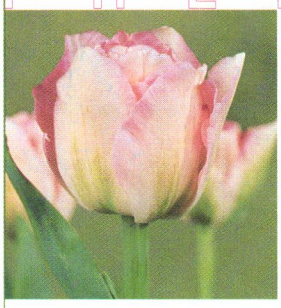
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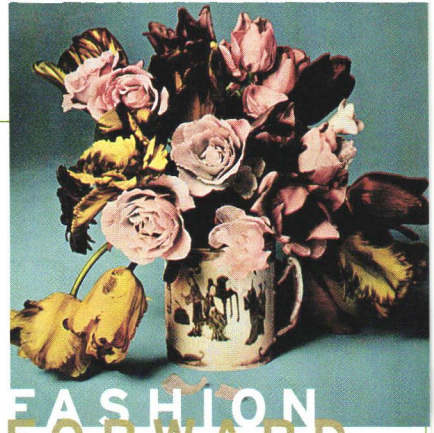


LAST SPRING, almost all the gardens we visited were ripe with rosy, voluptuous, double-flowered 'Angélique' tulips, which resemble peonies. We've already ordered our 'Angéliques' to plant this fall, and we're not alone: White Flower Farm, the genteel Connecticut garden catalogue and nursery, reports selling three times as many 'Angéliques' as any other tulip. "They've become hugely popular in the last eight years," says Sally Ferguson of the Netherlands Flower Bulb Information Center. "They're the best-sellers, along with 'Apricot Beauties.'" Introduced in 1959 by Holland's D. W. Lefeber & Company, 'Angéliques' are late bloomers. "They're spring's grand finale," says Ferguson.

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

SINCE SOHO HAS BECOME A tourists' theme park, it's not surprising that the interiors of the neighborhood's first hotel were dreamed up by Bill Sofield, who did the hip Hard Rock Hotel in Las Vegas. What's unexpected is the coziness of the decor for the 369 rooms at the new 15-story hotel, on West Broadway near Grand Street. (The building itself was designed by Helpern Architects.) **CHECK IN** "What I wanted is a feel that would be like coming home," says Sofield, the cofounder of Aero, who recently split with his partner, Thomas O'Brien (O'Brien still runs the Aero store and studio on Spring Street in SoHo). "I didn't want it to be slick," Sofield continues. So instead of a high-tech, high-modern, Hollywood version of a SoHo hotel, he created rooms in soft grays and taupes. **CHECK IT OUT** Sofield didn't use bedspreads because they're too formal for downtown. "There's something about a crisp, clean white Frette top sheet that sends a message of comfort and accessibility," he says. A knitted throw is casually draped across the bed and, he says, "you can curl up in the chair and pull the throw around you like you do at home." There are subtle references to the neighborhood's history as an artists' mecca. The framed full-length mirrors are lit by picture lights as if they were important paintings; black-and-white photographs from the Howard Greenberg Gallery hang on the walls—and prints can be purchased from the gallery or the hotel's concierge. **WRITE A CHECK** Some of the furniture is for sale, too. Many of the lobby pieces will be sold at the Aero store, including book-cloth lamps for $1,375, and Endicott armchairs for $4,800. (The bedroom furniture will be available by special order through the new Studio Sofield.) But you don't have to be able to afford the furniture to sample the Aero/Sofield look: rooms at the SoHo Grand begin at $199 a night.





FASHION FORWARD

THE WOMAN RESPONSIBLE for turning Van Gogh's *Olive Trees* into wool rugs and putting Picasso's *Femme Au Buste en Coeur* on down-filled pillows is planning to turn the work of fashion photographer Francesco Scavullo into home furnishings. But she's not going to be making pillowcases out of the cheesecake *Cosmo* covers that Scavullo shot for more than thirty years. ¶ "We're going to use his floral photographs," says Marilyn Goldberg, founder and president of Museum Masters International, Ltd., who has licensed the photographer's name and work (above) for carpets, upholstery, and porcelains. Goldberg, who sells to the stores of the Art Institute of Chicago and the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., has also signed up designer Norma Kamali, who will be creating home accessories and textiles. ¶ Not since the designer-sheet craze of the 1970s, it seems, has the fashion world shown so much interest in the home. Following the leads of Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein, Donna Karan has announced plans for a home collection. Barry Kieselstein-Cord, the jewelry and leather-goods designer, is developing a luxury tabletop line. Gianni Versace's signature silks are now being used for upholstery, too. Even Linda Allard of Ellen Tracy has introduced a line of bedding. ¶ The segue from Seventh Avenue to the D&D Building is a logical one, according to Kamali. "I think designers who have an individual style in the way they present their clothes and appeal to customers can make big contributions in the home field," says Kamali, who has designed home furnishings before, though never under a licensing arrangement. "But if you just put your name on things it's meaningless." ¶ The fusion of fashion and home furnishings is not merely about capitalizing on famous names and reputations. "These people have spent a lifetime creating beauty and style and they have archives that can be used to make many products," says Goldberg. Their business savvy is also enviable. To wit: Tommy Hilfiger, who hasn't produced a home collection yet, will be one of the keynote speakers this month at the first All-Industry Home Furnishings CEO Summit in Carefree, Arizona.

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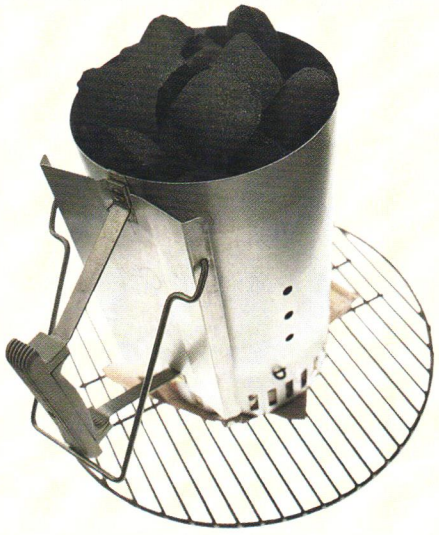
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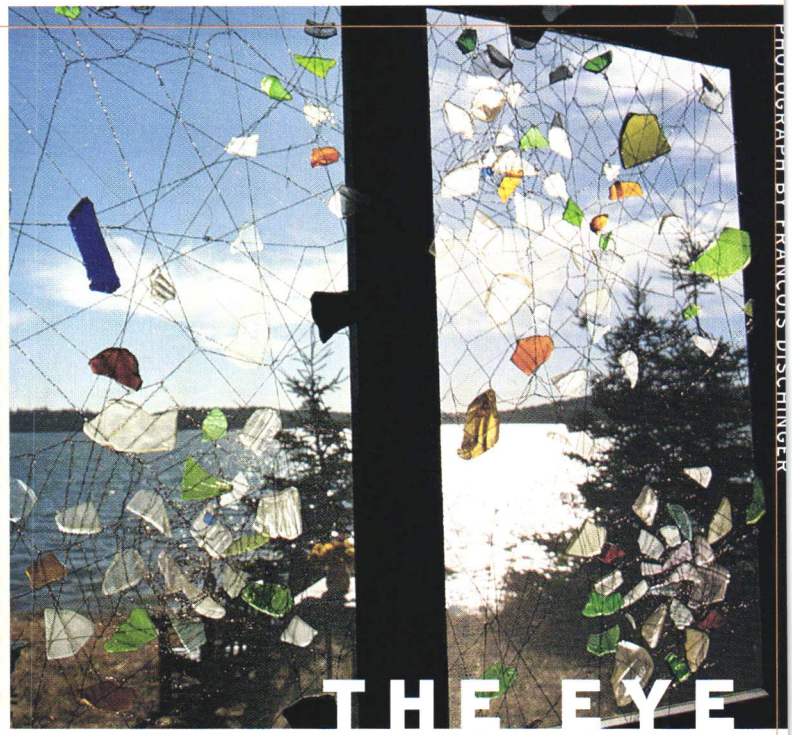
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FINDERS KEEPERS

THERE ARE GADGETS that can change your life forever: a charcoal starter is one of them. If you've been using lighter fluid or an electric coil to ignite your grill, be prepared for an epiphany. Charcoal Companion's stainless steel Chimney Starter or Weber's aluminized steel RapidFire require only a sheet of newspaper and a match to make a perfect fire. "The idea came from the Boy Scouts, who used to put paper in the bottom of a can with holes punched in it to start fires," says Chuck Adams, CEO of Charcoal Companion, a California company that has been selling the devices (which retail for about $12.95) for a dozen years. They're so easy to use—you put a piece of newspaper in the bottom, fill with charcoal, light the paper, and after fifteen minutes flip the coals onto your grill—that it's hard to comprehend why they haven't become a cookout classic. "There is something ingrained in people about using lighter fluid," says Adams. "It surprises me that we haven't put the lighter-fluid people out of business."





PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANÇOIS DISCHINGER

THE EYE

JUDYTH VAN AMRINGE is known for inventing beautiful uses for improbable items. Last summer, a friend with a beach house asked her to devise a new way to arrange shells and sea glass, having tired of putting them on windowsills and in glass jars. Van Amringe, a *House & Garden* contributing editor, looked around her own summerhouse in Maine and, inspired by the spiderwebs that are endemic to country life, decided to make cobwebs out of silver wire that could "catch" colored glass. She not-so-perfectly crocheted a series of webs out of the fine silver wire (12 or 15 gauge) she uses to make jewelry and nailed them with carpet tacks to her screen doors. She then tucked the beach glass into the web (she thinks other summer collectibles like small bits of driftwood and shells could be showcased in this manner, too). Van Amringe says she was more than pleased with the results. "It turns your door into a piece of stained glass that magnifies itself on the floor and walls," she says. "And birds don't fly into your screen doors anymore."

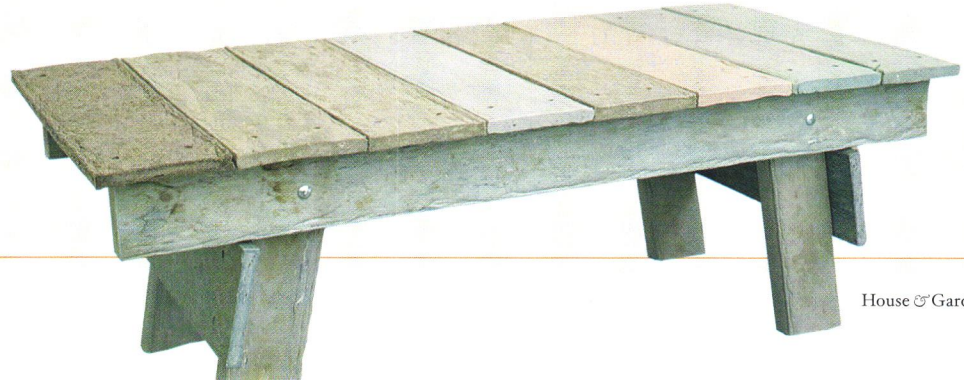
LEFT, PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHEN LEWIS

NEW VISIONS

DAN PETERMAN never intended to make handsome outdoor furniture. Nevertheless, his benches of lumber made from recycled plastic, in pale shades of green, gray, and rose, could influence the future of American patios.

A Chicago-based conceptual artist, Peterman, thirty-six, has worked in the recycling industry for many years, which was how he started using the boards that resemble weathered painted wood. "I'm not trying to be a furniture maker," says Peterman, who showed his benches at New York's Andrea Rosen Gallery last spring. "My goal is to prompt a discourse about the materials. That visitors in a gallery at first think it's wood allows them to have a sense of discovery and revelation." It's essential to his art that viewers be told that five benches—which are sometimes shown folded and stacked—represent two people's annual plastic consumption.

Peterman isn't cheered by knowing that plastic lumber is already replacing wood for piers, decks, and playgrounds. "Of course it's better to recycle the plastic than have it in a landfill," he says. "But it would be even better yet if we could devise systems of distribution that didn't require so much disposable material."



PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW HRANEK

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DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

What The ottoman or upholstered bench that functions as a coffee table.

The Ottoman Empire A '90s staple of Park Avenue libraries, suburban great rooms, and Colorado condos, ottomans used as coffee tables are ubiquitous. In their glossy ads in the 1996 Kips Bay Boys & Girls Club Decorator Show House catalogue, society decorators such as Noel Jeffrey, Tonin Mac Callum, and Penny Drue Baird showed rooms featuring ottomans topped with sterling-silver trays, candlesticks, flower arrangements, bowls of nuts, and glasses of champagne. Decorator Vicente Wolf has designed a leather ottoman for Henredon that he envisions as a cocktail table.

Empire Building Commercial catalogues have co-opted the look: ottomans supporting everything from cake and coffee to telephones and vases have appeared in recent mailings from the Bombay Company, Ethan Allen, the Horchow Collection, Ballard Designs, and Chambers. The Cuddledown of Maine catalogue even suggests using a down-filled ottoman ($550) covered in cotton paisley as a nightstand for a carafe of water.

Ancestry (Theory #1) "They're traditionally English," says Steven Shanstrom, manager of the SoHo branch of George Smith, the twelve-year-old British furniture company, which sells a wide variety of stools, ottomans, and pouffes covered in everything from semi-antique Turkish kilims to linen toiles. (The 54-inch-square stool, above, which is upholstered in lemon-yellow cotton jacquard, costs $2,195.) "The English in their way make everything functional. And when they went to the East, they started throwing carpets over everything. It wasn't really an American thing until we opened here in 1989. We take credit for bringing it here."

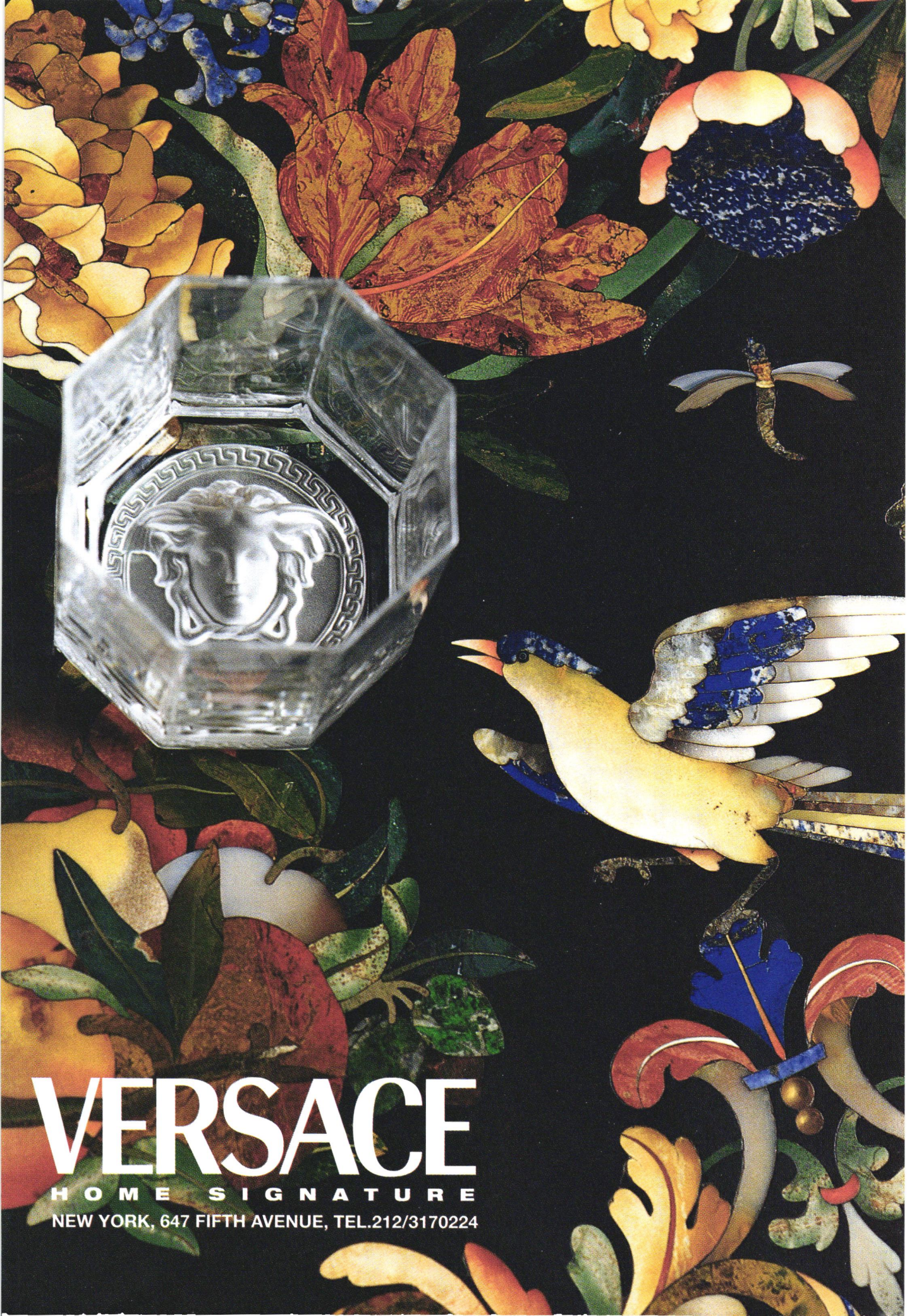
Ancestry (Theory #2) "I've never seen them as an English thing," says Mario Buatta, the decorator known for Americanizing the English country look. "I know back in the 1960s, Gloria Schiff put Japanese trays or baskets, with an ashtray, between two people sitting on a sofa. It's a kind of Orientalist thing."

Here Comes Trouble Babies, cats, and newspapers are an ottoman's enemy. Unlike traditional coffee tables, few ottomans have sturdy, flat tops so the chance for a vase, candle, or cup of coffee getting knocked over—and permanently scarring the ottoman—is almost inevitable. (But unlike coffee tables, ottomans are an acceptable footrest and can be used for extra seating in a pinch.)

Tray Chic "The key to making them into a table is using a tray or other flat surface," says Sami Rosenzweig, an interior designer, who owns the San Francisco store Slips. "You could use a very large plate or big, old books, but not a tray made of wire mesh." Eva Braca, who lives in Naugatuck, Connecticut, figured out a clever way to turn her four-feet-square ottoman into a virtual table. She topped it with a four-feet-square piece of glass.

Classic or Cliché "It's been done a lot," says Los Angeles decorator Matthew White. "I wouldn't do it in my own home. It's nice not to have trays everywhere. And it's not really that practical. One spilled glass of wine and you have to start over."

"I think more and more people are coming to realize how useful they are because they are multifunctional and can be moved around easily," says Rosenzweig. "Everyone has a sofa and they'll never go out of style. I feel the same way about ottomans." As a retailer who sells fabric and made-to-order slipcovers, Rosenzweig is obviously prejudiced: after all, nobody ever reupholstered a glass or lacquered coffee table.


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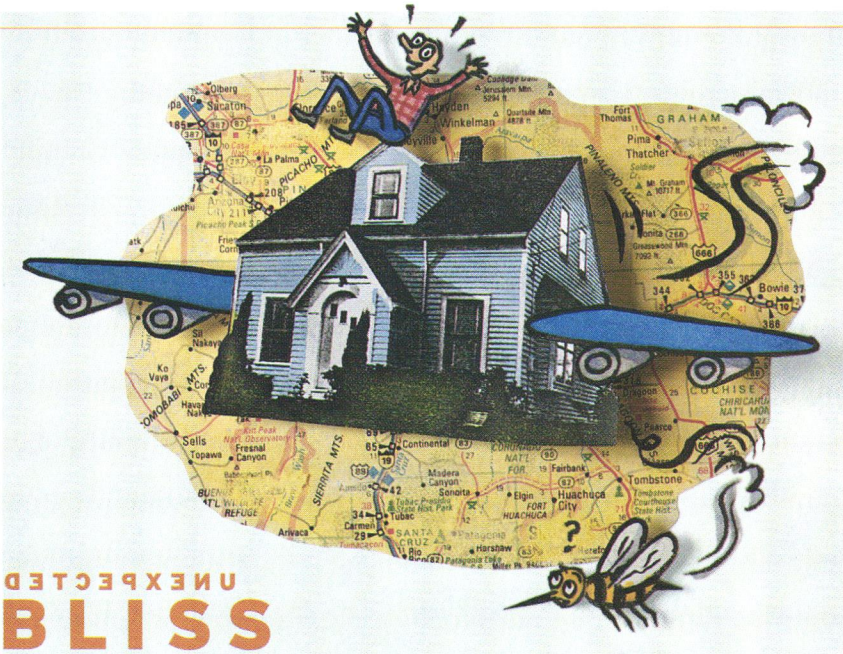


POTTING SHED

OVER THE PAST 159 YEARS, Tiffany's sterling-silver accessories—from Swiss Army knives and cigar cutters to golf tees and wine-bottle stoppers—have elegantly documented American obsessions. As if any further proof were needed that gardening is trendy, Tiffany is now minting silver horticultural miniatures: a wheelbarrow and shovel ($300); a gardener's basket and tool set ($295); and a flowerpot and watering can set in two sizes—for cream and sugar ($675), and for salt and pepper ($325).

"We can't contend that the garden is really useful except to the spirit and the same can be said about these," says John Loring, the company's design director. How about using the wheelbarrow as a saltcellar? "That would be perfectly charming," says Loring. "I'd be delighted if people used one for pepper, too, and put a pair at every place setting."





UNEXPECTED BLISS

WAS IT THE MILDEW OR WAS IT THE MILES? That's not such a far-fetched question now that you can earn American Airlines' frequent-flier miles for hiring Merry Maids to scrub the bathtub, TruGreen-ChemLawn to fertilize the backyard, and Terminix to exterminate ticks and cockroaches. The airline has teamed up with Service Master, a publicly traded company that markets itself as an auto club for the home. For a $79 annual fee, AAdvantage Home Program members can call a twenty-four-hour-a-day hotline to schedule appointments with Service Master's plumbers and electricians, arrange for cleaning and repairs (most of the participating firms are owned by Service Master)—and earn a mile for every dollar spent. For mileage junkies, having the hot-water heater explode now has its compensations: major repairs like that are accompanied by a 2,400-mile bonus.



THE LARDER

CULINARY CHAUVINISTS, REJOICE! California-grown Arborio rice now makes it possible to prepare an all-American risotto. What's more, the Arborio rice that the Lundberg Family Farms of Richvale, California, began selling this year (after five years of seed development) is available in white or brown varieties, finally making risotto palatable to serious health-food fanatics. "The brown rice is so great for vegetarians," says Lora Zarubin, *House & Garden*'s food editor, who suggests making a simple, nutritious risotto with fava beans and Parmesan. "It's tasty, dense, and very rich. It requires more liquid than the white, but it really holds the flavors." Zarubin likes Lundberg's white Arborio just as much (two-pound bags of both rices sell for about $2.49 each). "It's chewy and wonderful." And as authentic as it is delicious.



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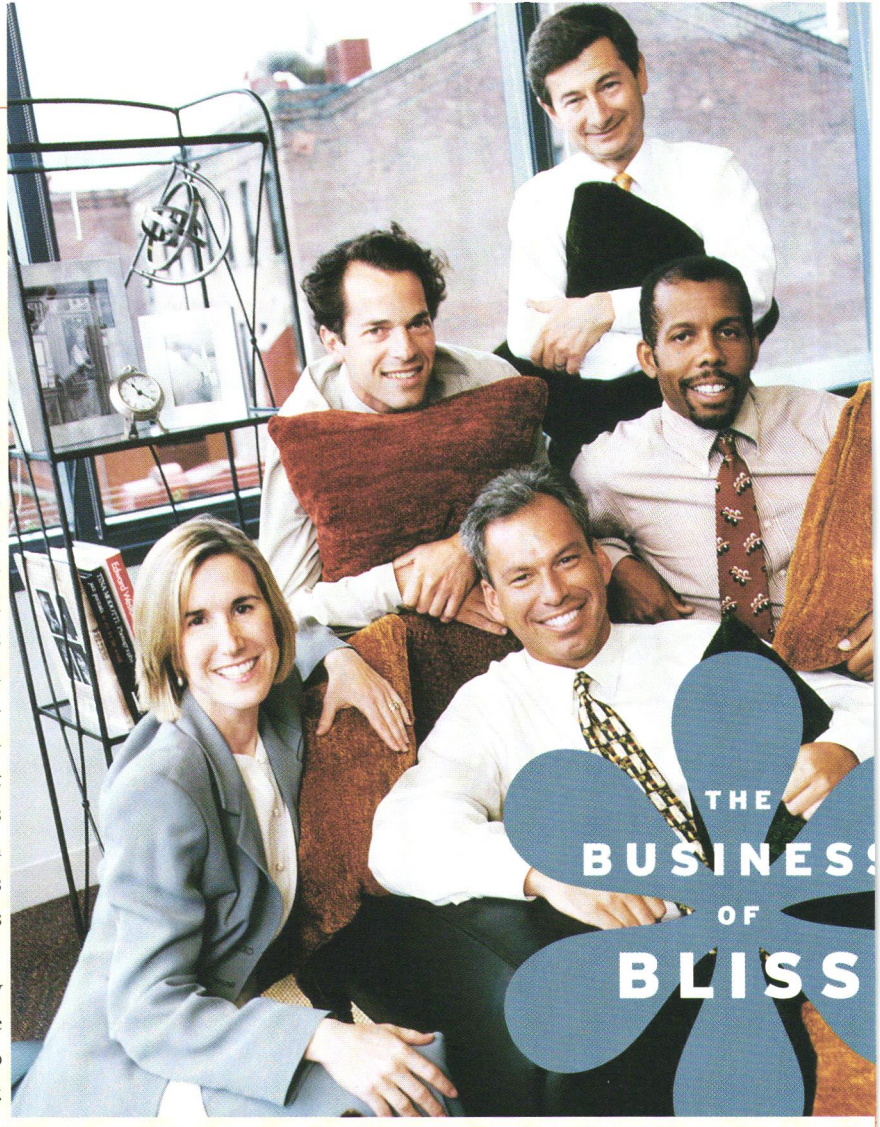
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Domestic Bliss*

The Pottery Barn is betting the farm on jewel-toned, beaded lampshades.

The fast-growing home-furnishings chain is "transitioning," as they like to say at the company's spare, modern headquarters overlooking San Francisco Bay. "This fall will be the first major change in the company's aesthetic, and we're both excited and nervous," says Gary Friedman, PB's ebullient president. "After all, we've had great success with the casual country aesthetic for five years. We will wean ourselves off the farmhouse look by next spring." He's wagering that his customers will respond to the funky, neo-Victorian charm of the shades (sold to fit both lamps and candlesticks), which is why he has ordered two million dollars' worth.

"We were all really bored," says Hilary Billings, the pixieish director of catalogue merchandising, explaining the decision to appeal to a more cosmopolitan sensibility.



RURAL REACTIONARIES Clockwise from bottom left: Hilary Billings, Scott Donnellan, Pat Connolly, Ken Wingard, Gary Friedman. Beaded lamps, left, from the fall catalogue.



"If *we* were ready for a change, we thought our customers must be, too. We knew we couldn't come up with *another* wrought-iron candlestick!"

"I don't think there's any distressed pine left in the world," jokes Pat Connolly, the avuncular general manager of catalogue sales for PB and its sister divisions—Williams-Sonoma, Hold Everything, Chambers, and Gardeners Eden, whose combined sales last year were $644.6 million (double what they were in 1991).

This spring, the company put sleeker, more urbane items into its catalogue alongside the pine armoires and patchwork quilts to monitor customer reaction to a new direction. The response to polished-metal soap dishes and industrial-looking, black lacquered Cinni fans proved encouraging. So in fall catalogues, PB staples like roll-arm sofas and magazine baskets won't be shown in sylvan villas or cottages but in downtown lofts. Billings maintains that "City Living," the theme for fall, is an attitude that transcends geography. "About every item we say: Can this work in a country house? Can

1940 The Secon family of Rochester, NY, buys 30,000 seconds from Glidden Stoneware of Alfred, NY. They bring their cache to Manhattan and open the first Pottery Barn, on Tenth Avenue near Twentieth Street.

1951 *The New Yorker* reports that PB "has the unpromising appearance of one of the less flourishing Salvation Army secondhand stores, and that the management would probably drop dead if asked to deliver a purchase."

1966 Tony Brush and Hoyt Chapin, wholesalers of white porcelain, buy PB from the Secons; 18 years later, The Gap, Inc, buys the 21-store chain.

1986 The Gap expands PB to 26 stores but can't make the chain turn a profit. Williams-Sonoma, which has been publishing catalogues since 1971, buys PB for $6 million.

1987 PB publishes its first catalogue. Items like gilt-framed mirrors, and kits to create faux-marble and Patina Green antique verdigris finishes are now available by mail order.



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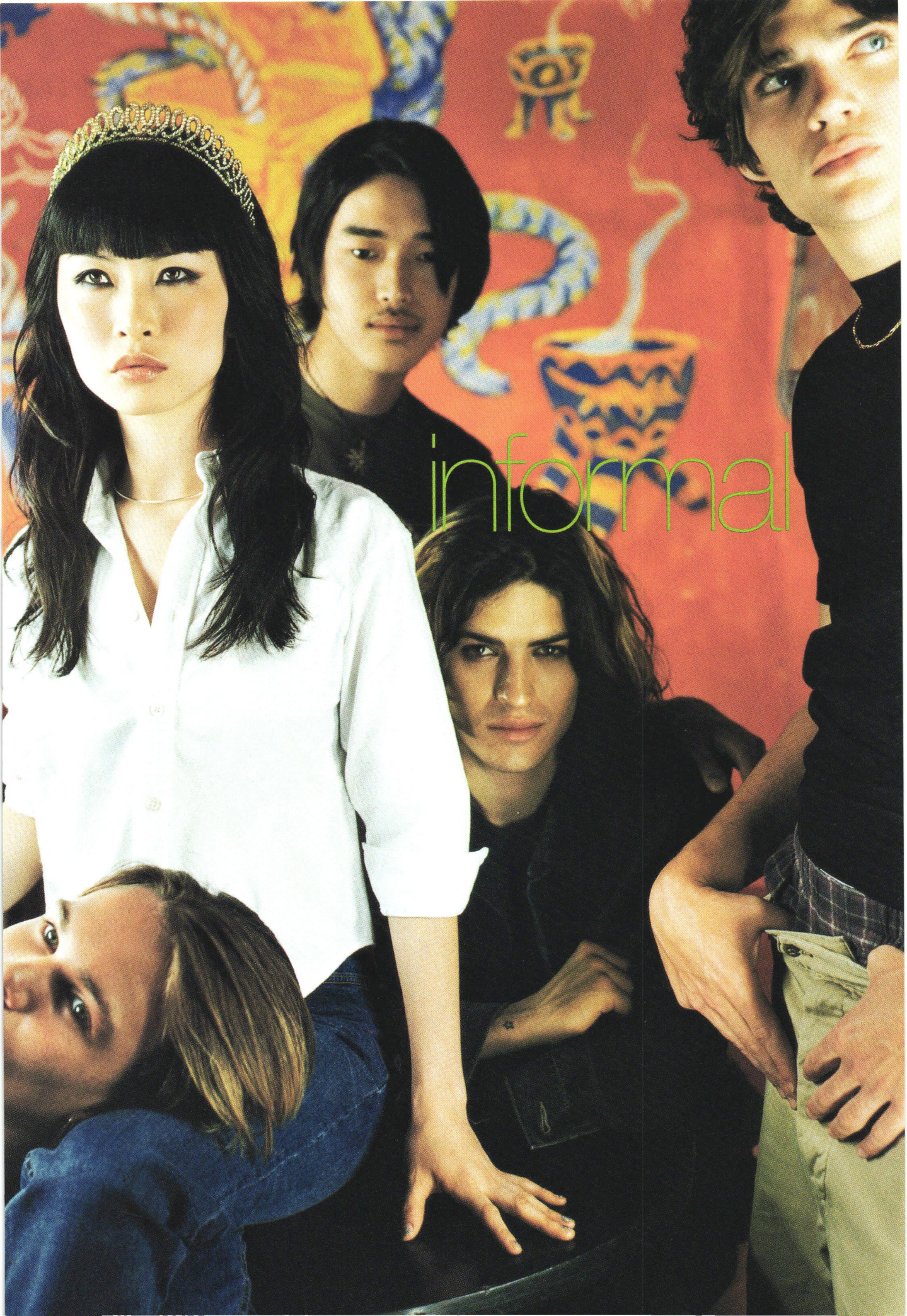
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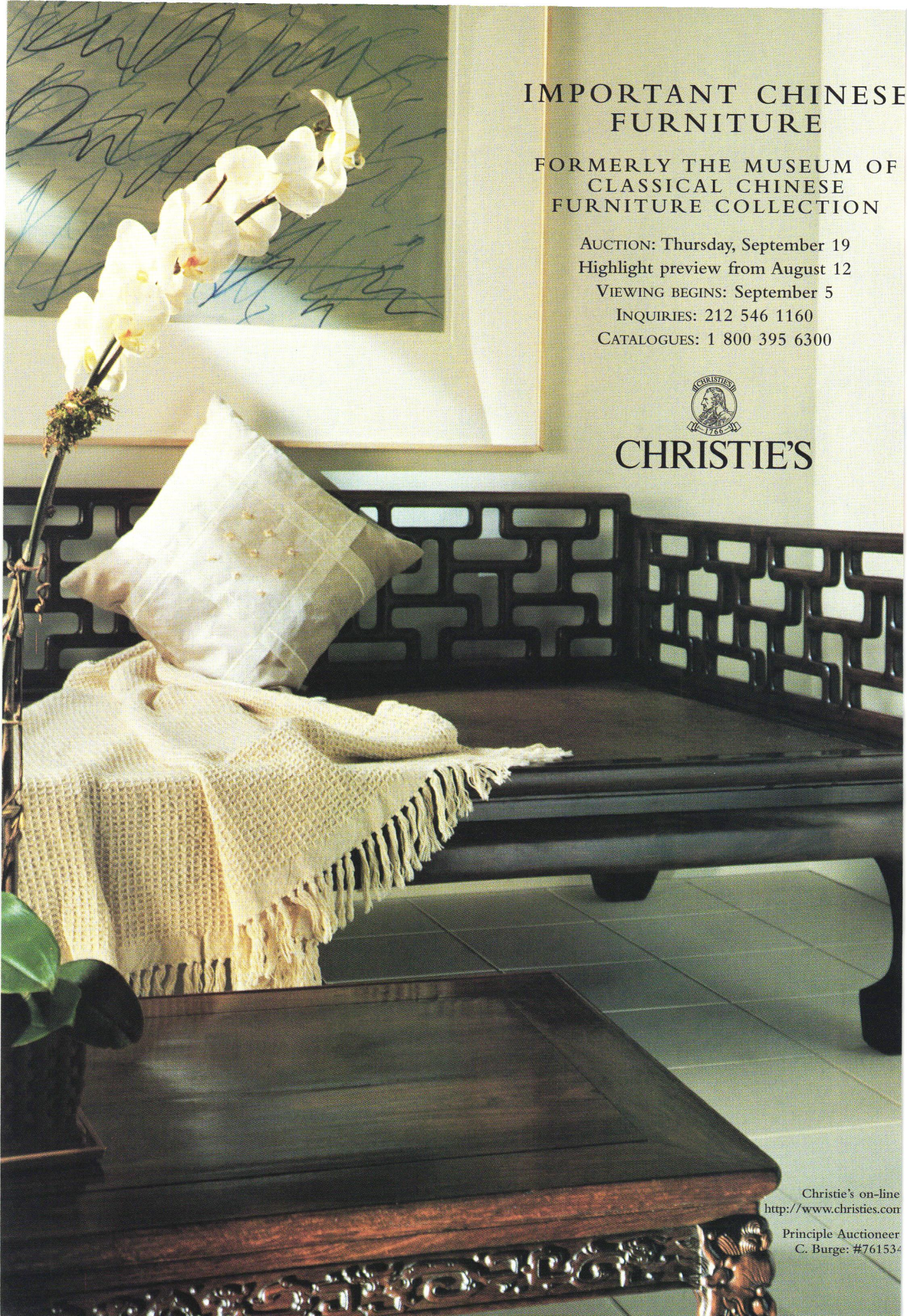
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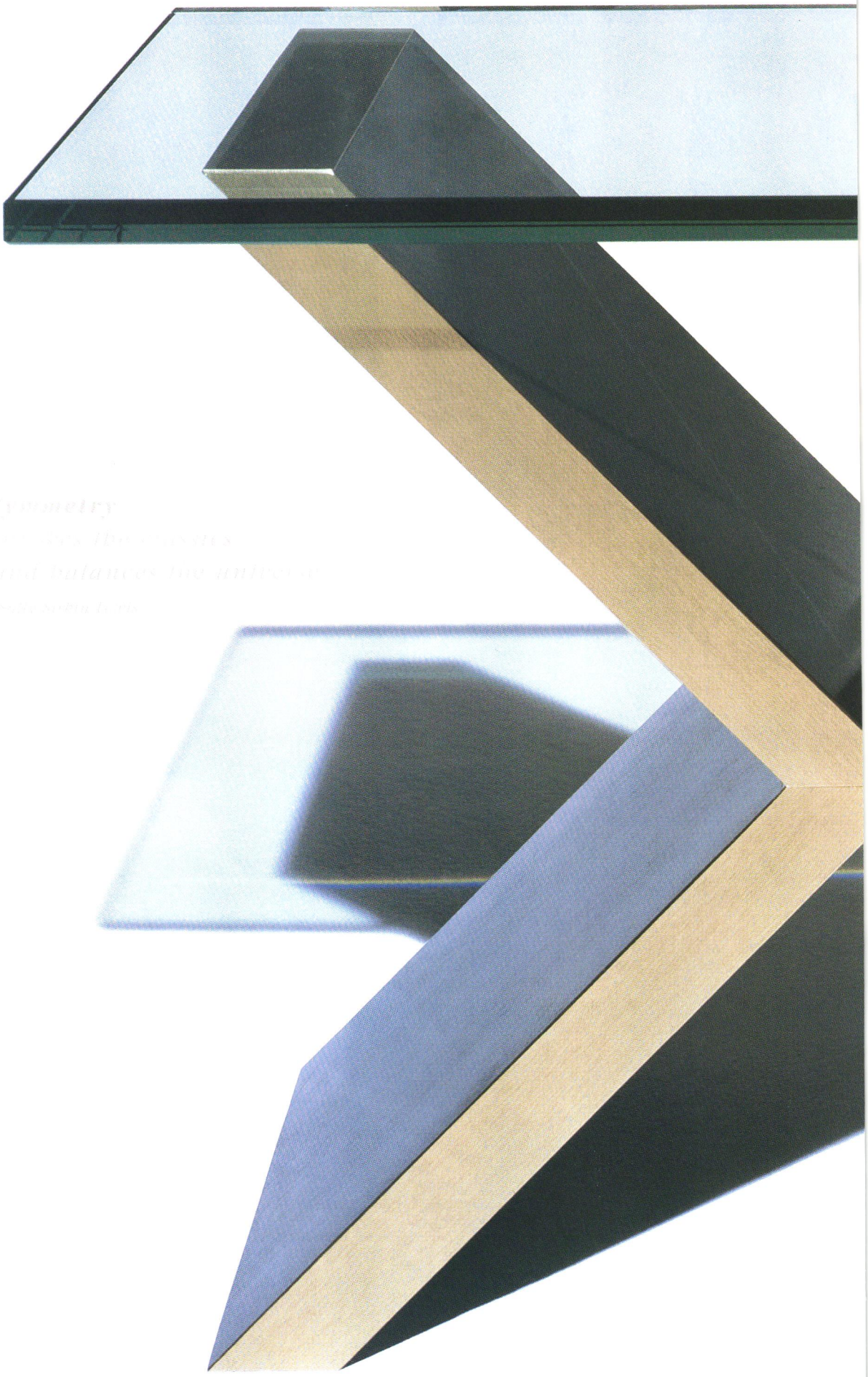


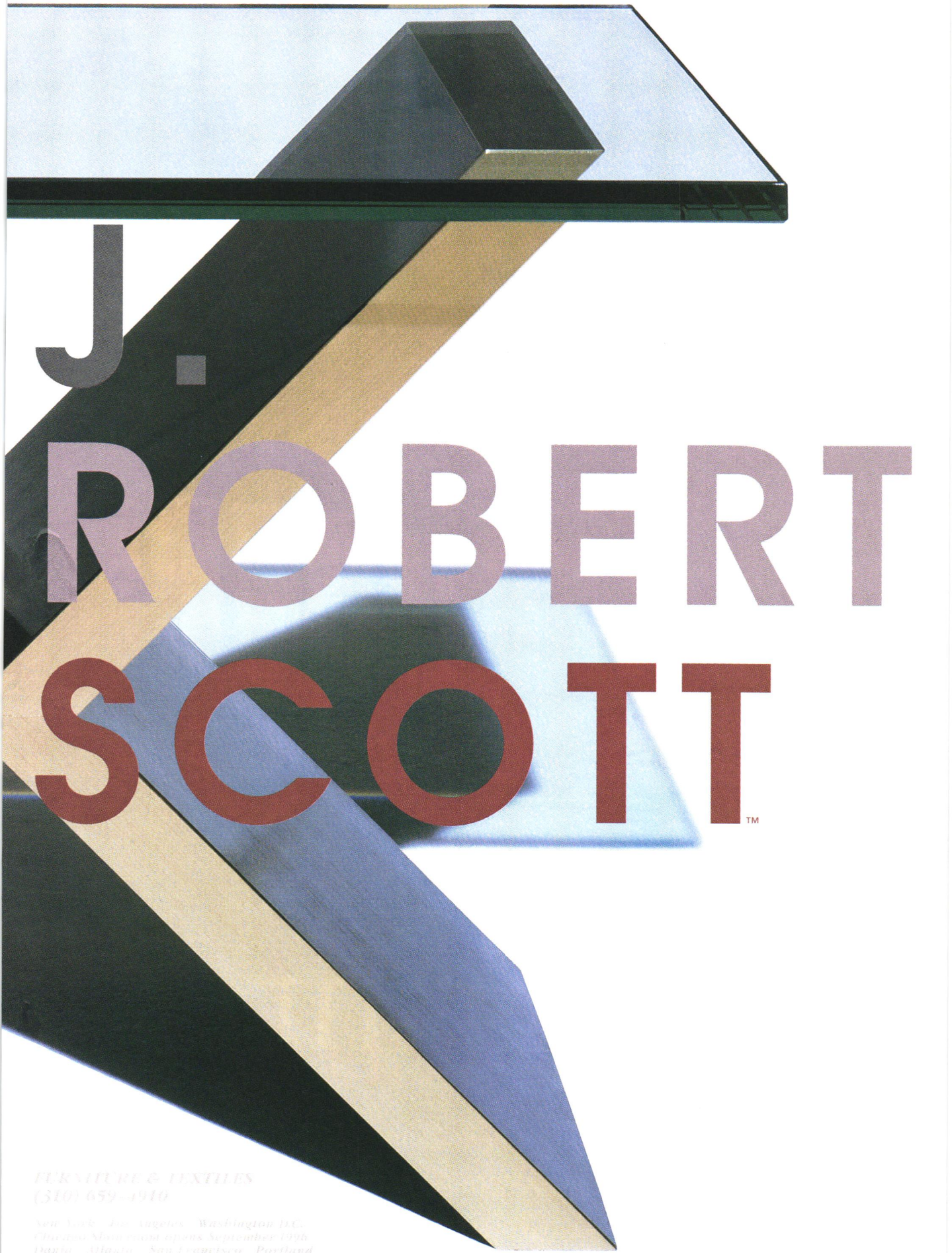
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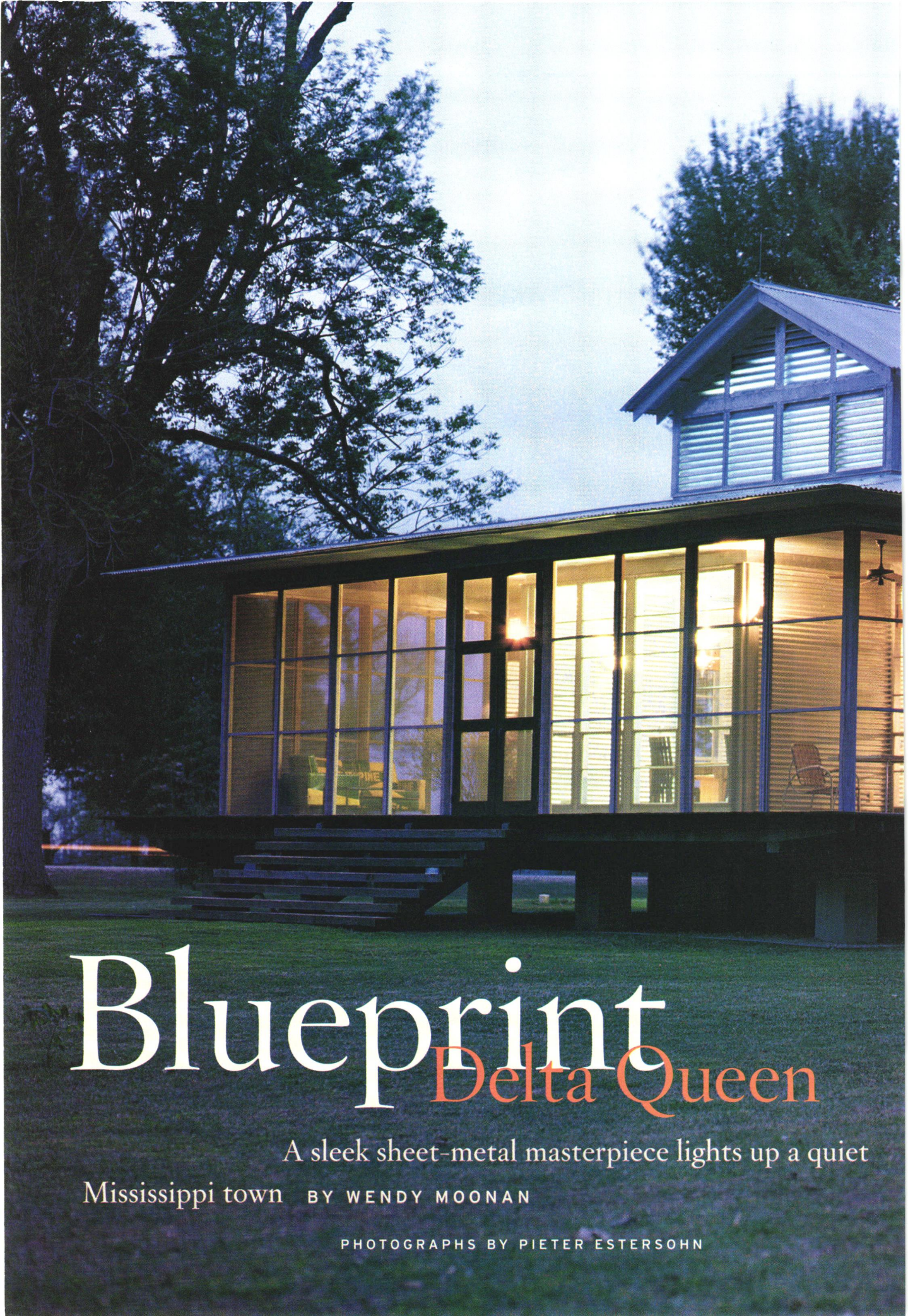

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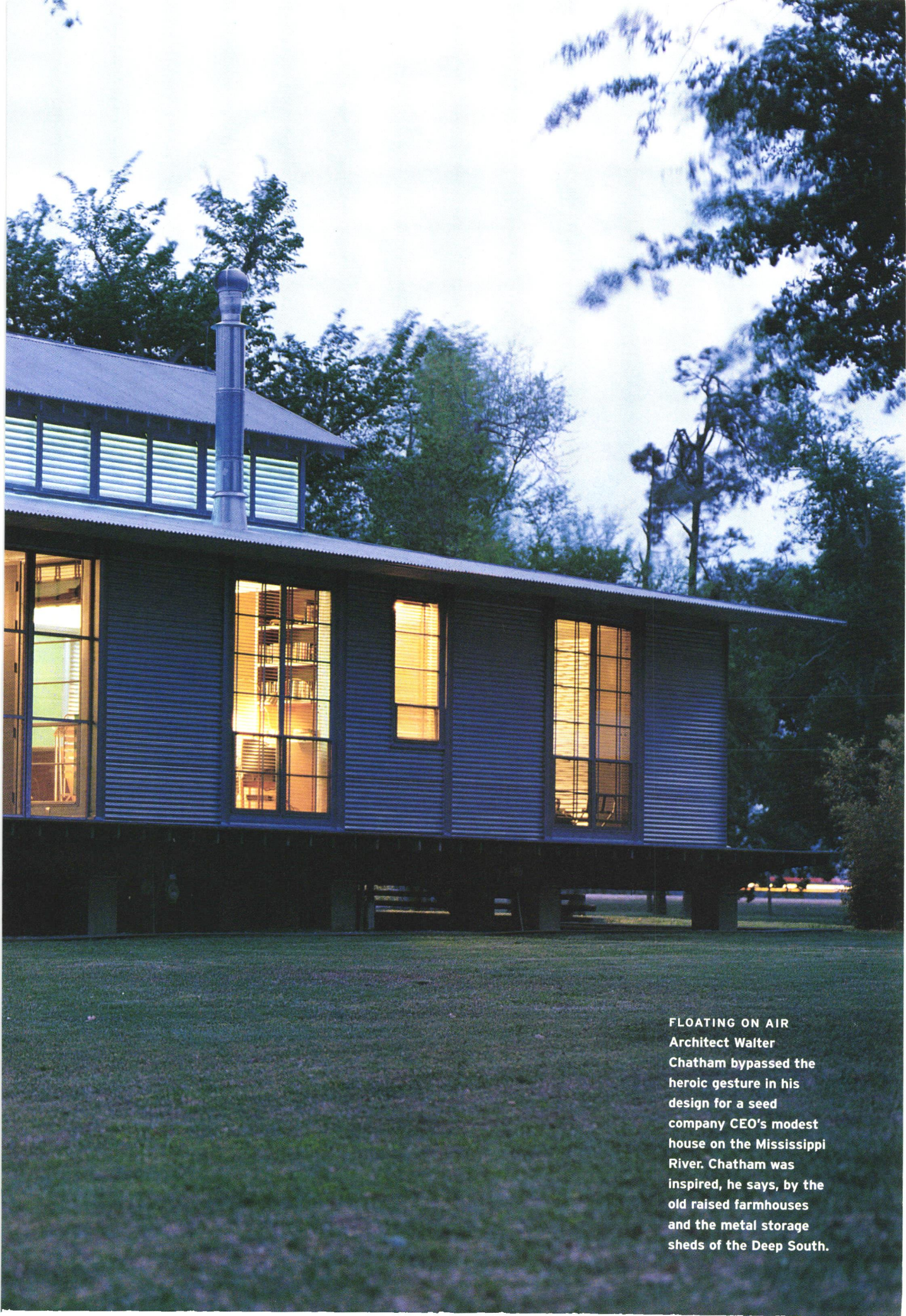
Blueprint

Delta Queen

A sleek sheet-metal masterpiece lights up a quiet Mississippi town

BY WENDY MOONAN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PIETER ESTERSOHN



FLOATING ON AIR Architect Walter Chatham bypassed the heroic gesture in his design for a seed company CEO's modest house on the Mississippi River. Chatham was inspired, he says, by the old raised farmhouses and the metal storage sheds of the Deep South.



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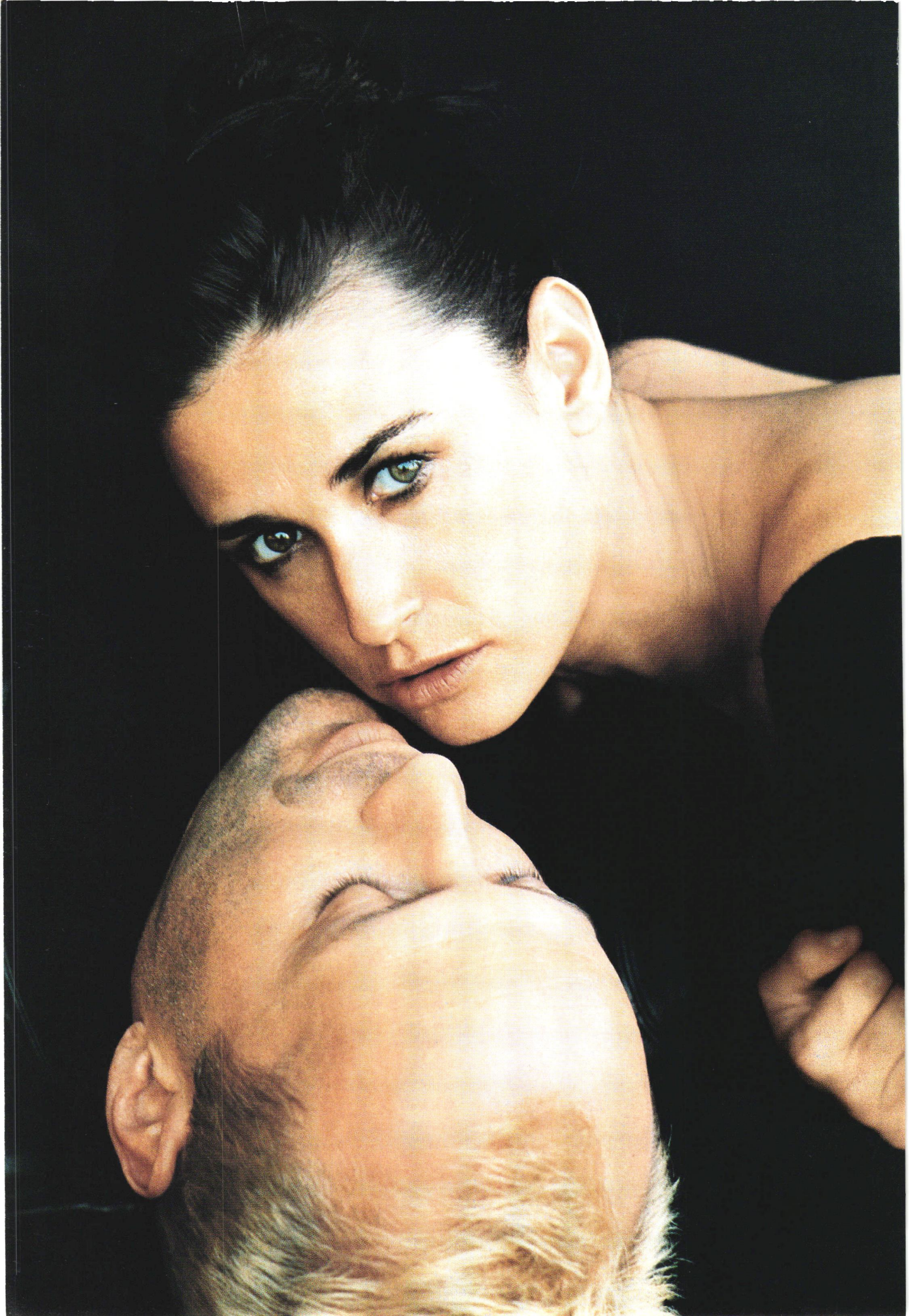


METAL CLAD The house feels larger than its 2,275 square feet because the scale is all pumped up. The vaulted center hall, above, is 19.5 feet high and 14 feet wide. It was designed for entertaining, but the spaces off of it, like the living room, left, are intimate so the owner feels comfortable when he is alone in the house.

THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA is a land of extremes. "The climate is the most difficult in America," says New York architect Walter F. Chatham, who recently completed a house there. "Ice storms, tornadoes, floods, plagues of locusts, poisonous snakes—it's biblical."

Chatham should know. His forebears settled in this fertile farmland east of the Mississippi River, between Memphis, Tennessee, and Vicksburg, Mississippi. They left only after his great-great-grandfather was run out of the Delta; he had murdered William Faulkner's grandfather, W. C. Faulkner, in a business dispute, and even though the accused was acquitted at trial, the family decided to move to the Carolinas.

Two years ago, Chatham, the president of the Architectural League of New York, was asked to come down to Scott, Mississippi, to design a house for the chairman and CEO of Delta and Pine Land Company, a $1 billion public company that produces *(continued on page 112)*




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LOCAL COLOR
The center hall above, mixes steel with magnolias, vintage hampers with cannonballs from the Civil War. The screened porch, right, is an outdoor living room, with furniture upholstered in D&PL tarpaulins normally used to protect bales of cotton.

cotton and soybean seeds for growers all over the world. The chairman wanted a house small enough to live in alone, but large enough to entertain a constant stream of international visitors. And he wanted a building that would fit into the fabric of a village with a population of three hundred people.

Unlike Greenville, an old riverboat depot a few miles down the Mississippi River, Scott is no ordinary southern town. It has no antebellum mansions or grand churches. There aren't even any Scott family members there anymore. The town gained importance only in 1911, when the British managers of the Fine Cotton Spinners and Doublers Association, Ltd., of Manchester bought 80,000 acres to grow long-staple cotton for their mills in England. The firm (later renamed Delta and Pine Land Company) built a small village for its managers, with neat rows of white houses on the shady lanes along Deer Creek.

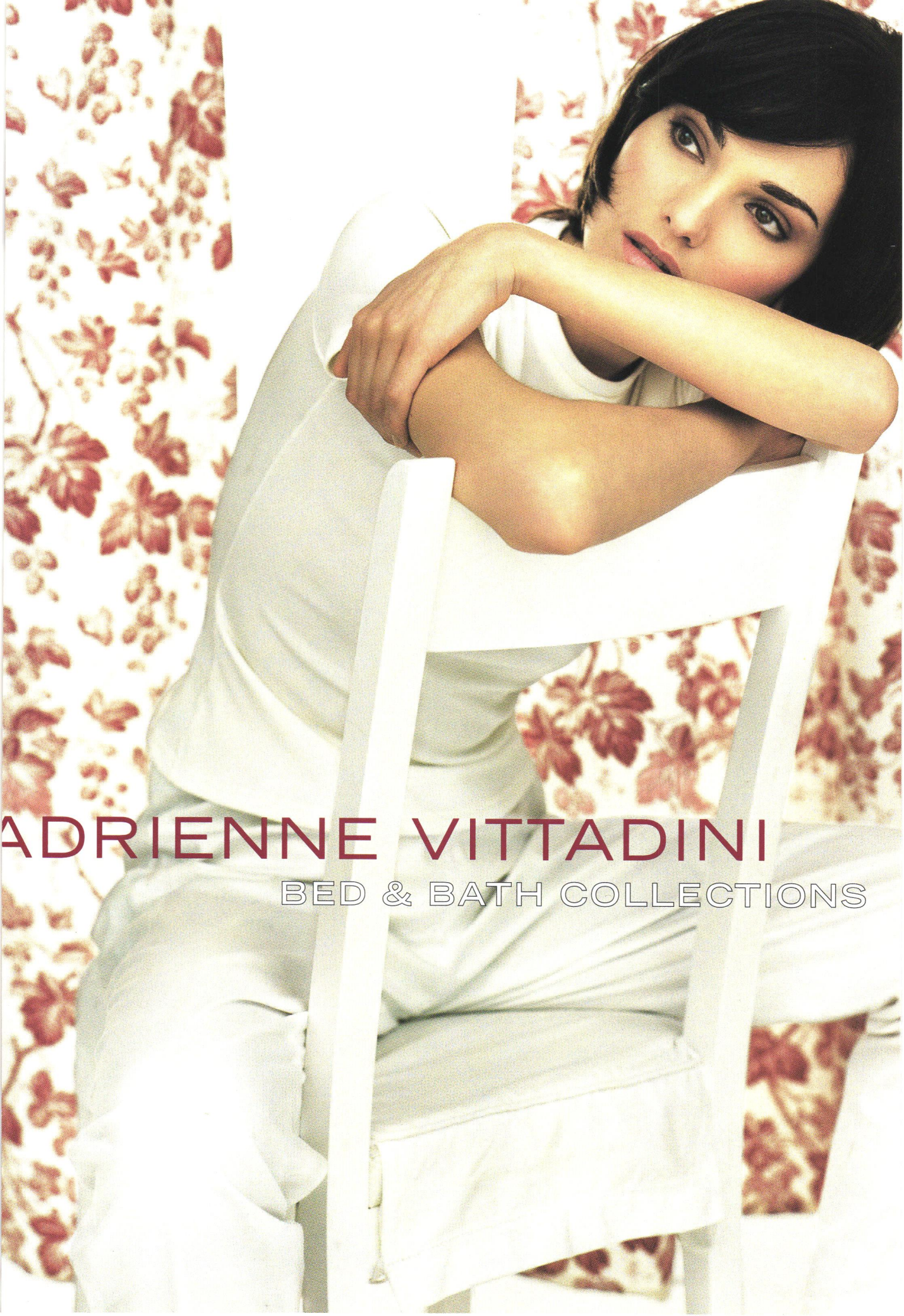
Today, eighteen years after the British sold D&PL, company executives continue to occupy the modest houses and work "downtown"—which consists of D&PL's two-story corporate headquarters, a post office, a farm supply store, and small grocery. The verdant hamlet with well-tended gardens is still more reminiscent of the English countryside than the dirt-poor towns of the Delta.

Or *was* until Chatham built the new house for the D&PL chairman.

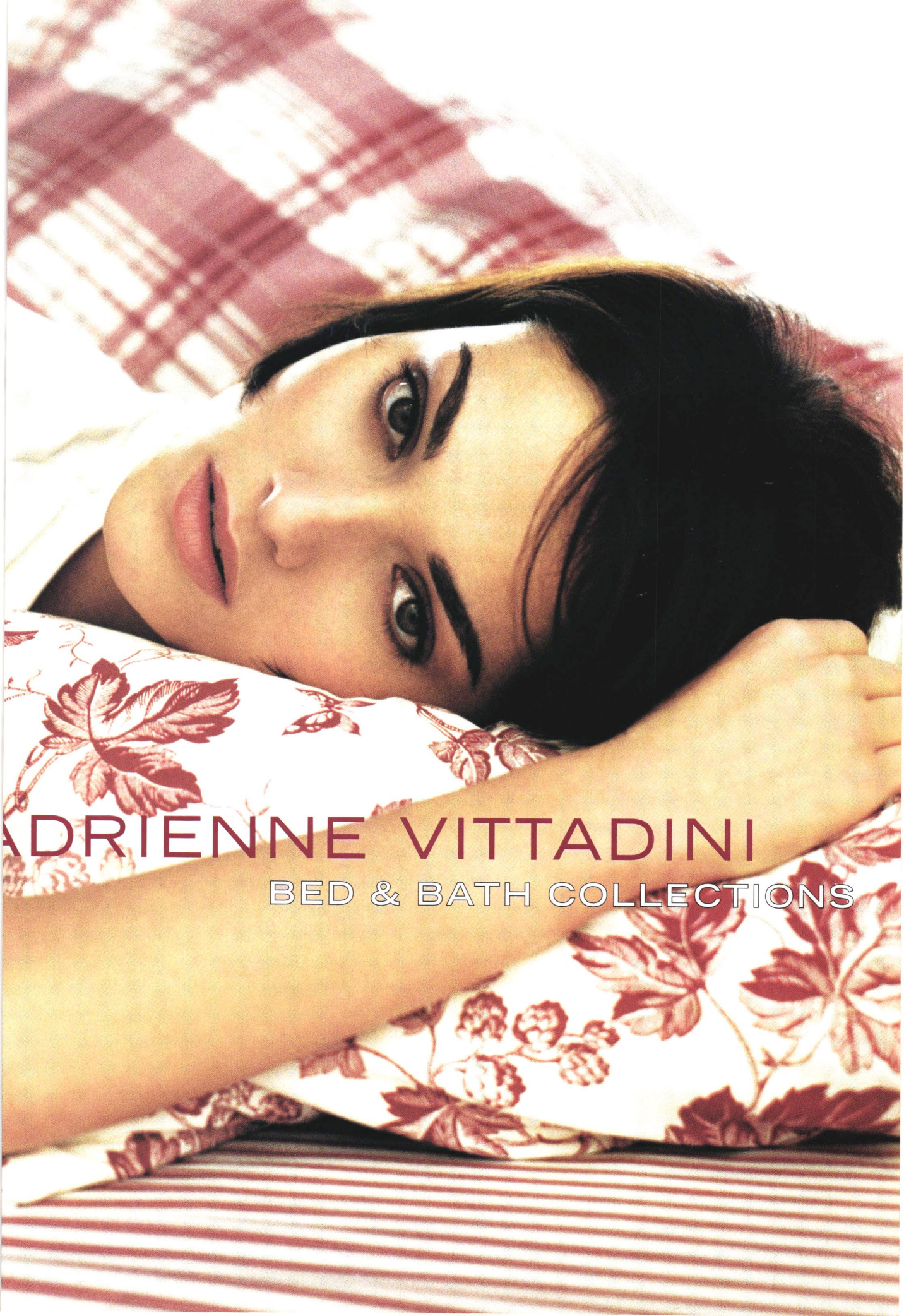
"The original idea for the house was to do something evocative of the Delta—but not one of those gracious southern homes fronting the Mississippi," Chatham recalls. "If we had built a McMansion, people would have been scandalized. It couldn't look highfalutin'."

Chatham has long been a student of vernacular architecture: that is, the usually anonymous regional buildings that evolve from local building traditions, forms (barns, silos, warehouses, farmhouses), and materials. For Scott, he proposed a house clad inside and out with corrugated steel, a nod to the Delta's cotton warehouses. "Not many houses there are corrugated," says Chatham, with a smile. "But a lot of chicken sheds are."

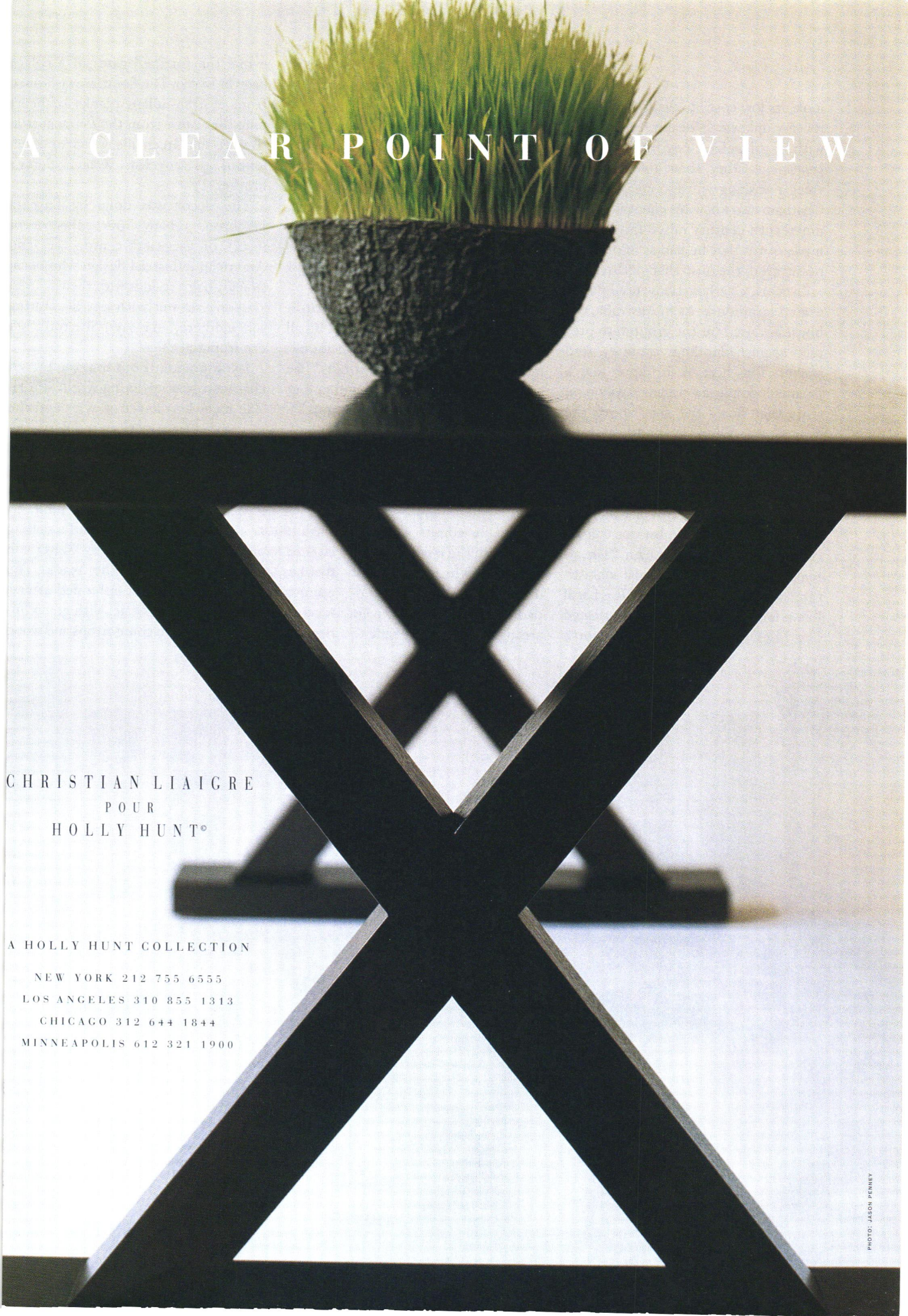
Chatham had already built houses in sheet metal and was attracted to its


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look, its low cost, its availability—and its easy upkeep: "Cheap recycled steel with a galvanized coating needs no treatment other than an occasional vinegar washing with a sponge," he says. Chatham also knew his client liked the nineteenth-century raised farmhouses made of tin that he had seen on business trips to the Australian outback.

In Scott, Chatham reinvented the elevated farmhouse. As in Australia, the house is raised off the ground, to protect against flooding, termites, and snakes. But here it is more like a Japanese temple, an elegant pavilion on stilts that floats five feet above the ground, providing views and catching breezes. And here it has a roof overhang to shelter the deck from sun and rain.

The house is a hybrid in which the "the universality of vernacular building and the most refined abstract culture come together," says Chatham. "The attempt is to mediate between a sophisticated form and a banal form." It is banal like a farm building, but sophisticated like Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House. "There's a lot of budget Mies in this house, if you take the roof off," Chatham jokes.

"My dream is to make a thing as simple as possible, so it looks like a junior draftsman designed it." The floor plan, for example, couldn't be more straightforward: the two bedrooms, living room, dining room, and kitchen open off a center hall that runs the length of the house. A generous screened porch wraps around the rear façade.

"What makes this house not ordinary is the scale," says Chatham. "It's all pumped up." The portals are monumental. Doors are all 10 feet tall. "The center hall is 19.5 feet high and 14 feet wide. It's scaled for public functions."

Chatham also takes ordinary materials and uses them in extraordinarily inventive ways. "The house may be overdesigned and overdetailed," he admits, "but it's made with the most available materials." The massive front doors, for example, are studded with aluminum rivets arranged in a grid meant to evoke the fortified gates of a palace keep in Kyoto. The floors are fashioned from custom-milled planks of heart pine that came from the Percy cotton compress in Greenville, which once belonged to novelist Walker Percy's brother.

The decor was done by Barbara Jakobson, a New York collector of works of twentieth-century art and American industrial design who occasionally helps friends with their houses. "I didn't set out with any decorating scheme here," she says. She took her cue from the client.

Jakobson points out that the DP&L chairman grew up during World War II. "He loves heroic war movies and the best American industrial designs of the 1930s to the 1950s," she says. In the dining room, for example, there's a circa 1934 trestle table by Russel Wright and a ceiling light designed by Walter von Nessen in the 1930s. The kitchen is fashioned after a 1940s classic, with green linoleum countertops and wood



RIPPLE EFFECT The metal walls are softened by floors of old pine, and a 1940s-inspired kitchen that has linoleum countertops and wood cabinets with ripple-glass inserts.

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cabinets with ripple-glass inserts. The bathrooms have standard fixtures, Artemide ceiling lights, and tiles in a 1940s palette of pale greens and grays. The aluminum side chairs were designed for the U.S. Navy in 1947.

Like Chatham, Jakobson uses industrial materials with a 1990s twist. A new sofa on the porch is upholstered in yellow-and-green D&PL vinyl tarpaulins normally used to protect bales of cotton. The fireplace breast is covered in cork, then neatly framed in aluminum, in the style of the American designer Donald Deskey, who worked in the 1930s. The built-in bedroom closets are patterned after an original Eileen Gray wardrobe. (Chatham characterizes the style of the decorating as "Eileen Gray meets Ma and Pa Kettle," referring to the famous architect who designed interiors and furniture in Paris in the 1920s.)

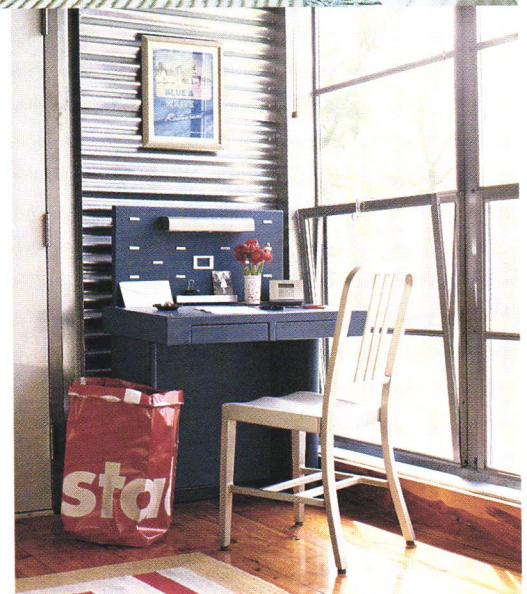
There is a recurring use of typography: old roadside signs ("Night Crawlers, 35 cents"); a painting depicting a Mickey Mantle baseball card; a Palazzetti mirror scrawled with a graffito by Man Ray. "I have a great affection for graphics, for words. I like things with type on them," Jakobson explains. "There's a concreteness to the letters."

And how does the chairman like his new house? "Indoor life is important in the Delta, and this house is a good environment to spend time in," he says. "In fact, it's much more interesting to live in than I imagined it would be. Though it's small, it never feels confined because the spaces off the center hall are so intimate. And the way light enters in the morning and plays off the walls at night continues to fascinate me."

Walter Chatham is one of the gifted young architects today who are inspired by the authenticity of vernacular architecture. His house in Scott can be understood as a reaction against the heroic formal gestures of modern architects. Here he has infused a new spirit into the "everyday" architecture of the old South.

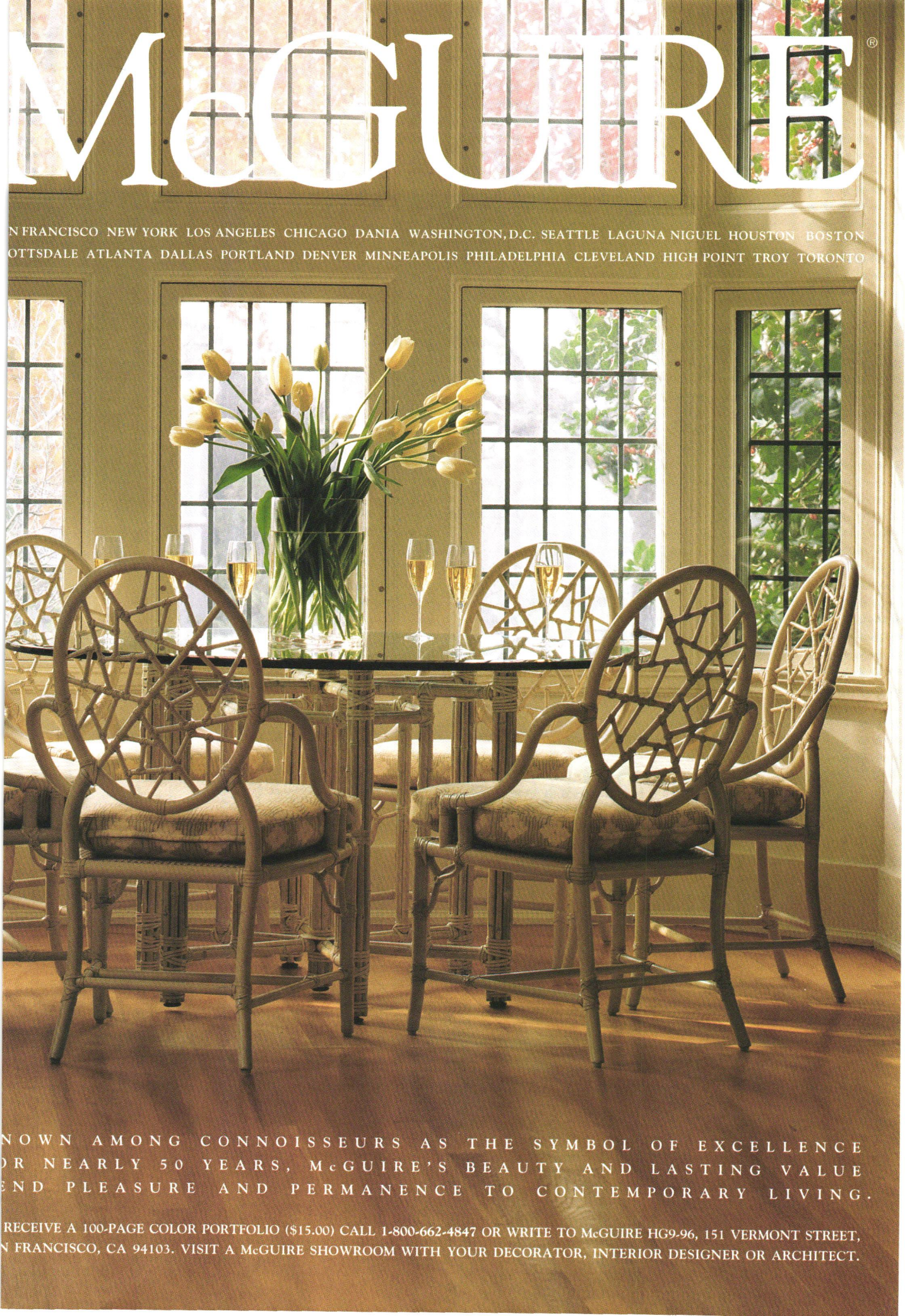






VINTAGE PIECES The porch, above, has webbed chairs, while the master bedroom, left, has Kurt Versen lamps, a Frank Gehry Power Play chair, and a Picasso-inspired rug from Einstein Moomjy. The desk in the guest bedroom, bottom, once graced a stateroom on the U.S.S. "United States." Jos Vandermeulen designed the trash basket of recycled billboards. Sources, see back of book.

"Blueprint" *is a regular column about architecture. Contributing Editor* **Wendy Moonan** *has written for* Architectural Record, The New York Times, Town & Country, *and* Harper's Bazaar.


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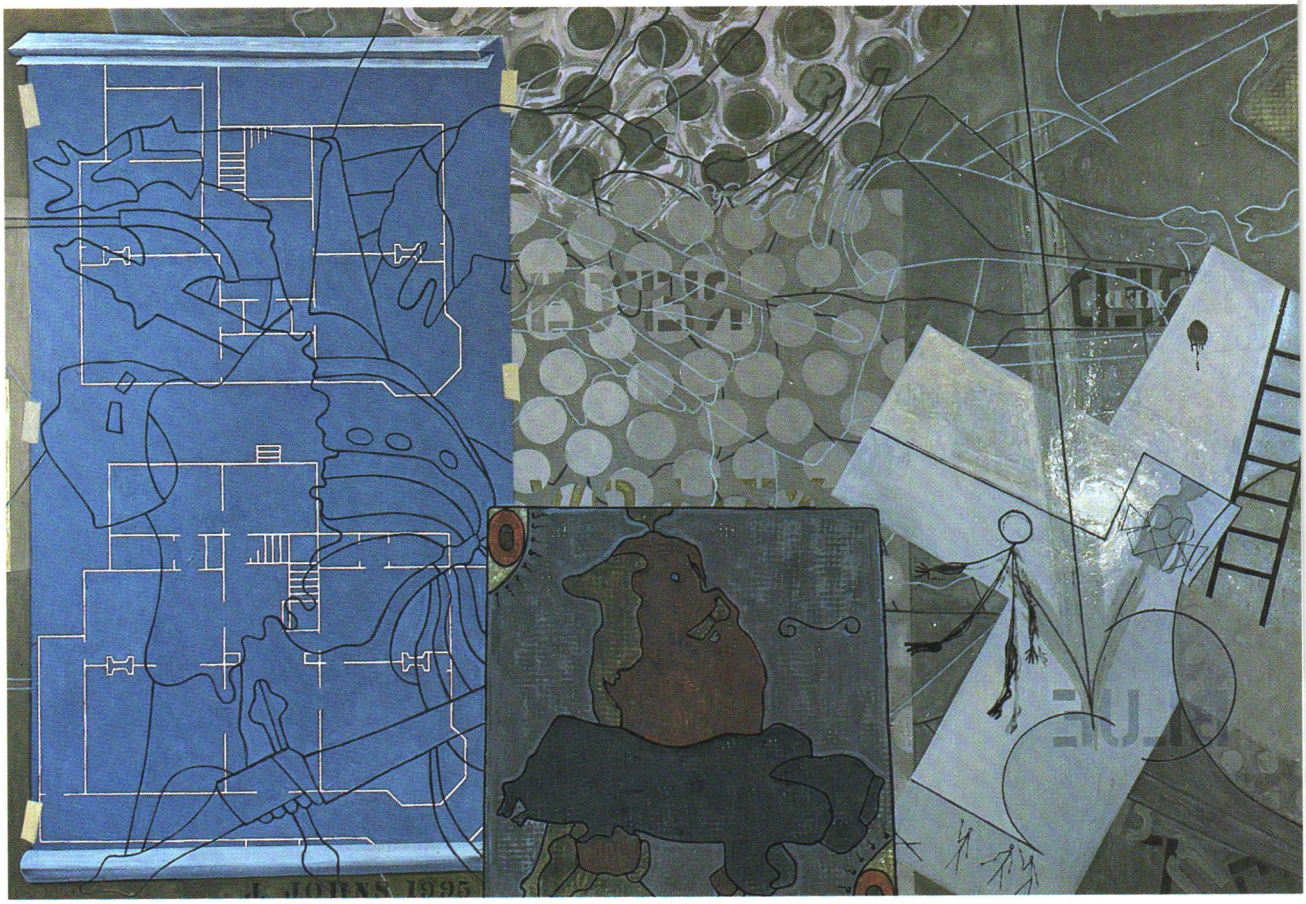
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Odyssey

Floor Plans

Novelists rewrite their childhoods. Artists redraw them.

John Updike and Jasper Johns do a bit of both **BY JOHN UPDIKE**



PAINT, MEMORY Jasper Johns's "Untitled," 1992-1995, reconstructs the architecture of childhood.

HOUSES FROM OUR CHILDHOOD remain castles in our minds. Their halls are longer, their stairs higher, their sunlight brighter and their aromas stronger, their basements and attics more richly mysterious and frightening than any we encounter in a lifetime of subsequent dwellings. Jasper Johns has reconstructed the blueprint of a house he lived in as a young boy and overlaid it with a web of lines that remind me of the coloring books I used to spread out on the carpets of the dining room and living room of the first house I lived in, in Shillington, Pennsylvania.

Drawing was my passion and my escape hatch. Johns's painting is full of totemic symbols—stick figures, compass-perfect circles, ladders to nowhere, radiant *O*s like eyes of God—such as figure in our first attempts at imagery, when the very idea of spinning a world from the point of our pencil or crayon has the majesty of *ex nihilo* creation, with something of *nihil*'s abysses still in it. I remember feeling, through the paper and the carpet and the floor beneath, an awesome depth that welled up at me as my marks on the paper accumulated. Accumulation and overlay seem to be Johns's method here; we feel ourselves at a draftsman's table, with its doodles and test-patterns alongside the rigors of mechanical drawing. The painting's blue-green space is shallow but many-layered. Topmost, some complex dark brown shapes seem to be organic but resist resolution into anatomy; under their square a large butterfly is pinned; on the other side of the canvas, a spinning galaxy burns behind everything. The pictorial world's basic elements are lines and colors, and the colors here, floating in the pervasive aquamarine, are spelled out, RED and BLUE, the letters backward and scattered. In the first innocence of semiotic manipulation, RED can be red, and blocks can be a city.

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by name, has come out with a series of thick cutouts, nicely detailed wooden blocks representing the principal buildings of Shillington as it used to be—the high school, the elementary school, the town hall, Becker's Garage. These were all places I knew, from within, as live environments, especially the schools. A recent addition to these collectibles is my boyhood home, at 117 Philadelphia Avenue, shown with the dogwood tree that was planted when I was born—or was I a year old? Never mind, the tree still lives, and puts forth an annual show of bloom along a street that hasn't, considering what the last sixty years have done to the United States elsewhere, changed very much. The house belonged to my mother's parents, and in the depths of the Depression they took in my jobless father, my mother, and her baby. I, the baby, lived in it for my first thirteen years.

I gaze at the miniature house façade and remember the breathless feeling I used to have, coming back from the movies at nine o'clock of a summer evening and daring myself to make a run for the front door, past the goblins I imagined were lurking on the porch, behind the curved brick walls with their graceful burden of pillars and roof. The porch roof, actually, stuck out, with a generous cantilever, on either side of the narrow façade, as did a sunroom on the left, where my grandfather used to sit in his favorite easy chair, surrounded by potted plants and diagonal



SOUTH CAROLINA The original on which Johns, right, based his work.

Shifting Shapes by Jasper Johns

I WANTED A NEW painting to replace one that had been hanging for many years in my house in St. Martin. I hoped it might be spatially complex, incorporating a number of elements that had appeared in a somewhat piecemeal way in earlier works of mine.

A reflection of the earlier painting that this new one was meant to supplant fills most of the canvas, and over that is the network of lines, tracings of figures from Grünewald's *Isenheim Altarpiece*. Perhaps there is the suggestion (bottom center) that another painting of mine is leaning against this one.

> I thought that reconstructing the plan would be easy, but as soon as I began to draw, I ran into gaps in memory that seemed like gaps in the house

To the right is a cruciform organization with the silhouette of a child based on my etching *The Seasons*; a spiral-armed galaxy; and a sort of hanged-man figure suggested by Picasso's depiction of Icarus.

On the left is the image of a taped-up blueprint, my attempt to remember the spaces in the house where I spent most of my early childhood with my grandfather and his second wife, Montez. I lived in a number of houses of relatives of mine. None must have been like the house of anyone who grew up with a family. I was a guest in whatever house I was in.

I thought I had a clear idea of the house plan and that it would be easy to reconstruct it, but as soon as I began to draw, I ran into gaps in memory that seemed like gaps in the house. At times, the connection between part of the room and another part didn't seem to exist, and at other times my memory of the scale of the room had to be adjusted in order to fit it inside the building. I have no memory of the things I was not interested in. Like linen closets. I recall the spaces I had an interest in, like the ones inhabited by grown-ups. Perhaps the ones I was not allowed in?

By now the real house had been demolished. I thought that a cousin who had often visited in childhood might



sketch her memory of the place, and she asked her sister to do the same. Their quite different ideas helped me to rationalize the lacunae, the missing information, the distortions, and, when an old photograph of the house surfaced, it helped, too. But the photograph must have been taken before the 1930s, because missing are two big magnolia trees and a wisteria vine near the porch. And the sidewalk and low brick wall are missing, too.

— JASPER JOHNS, MAY 1996

A comprehensive survey of the artist's work, "Jasper Johns: A Retrospective," *will be on view at New York's Museum of Modern Art from October 20, 1996 to January 21, 1997. It will include recent pieces, exhibited for the first time—including* Untitled, *1992–1995.*

SHE WAS QUITE BORED

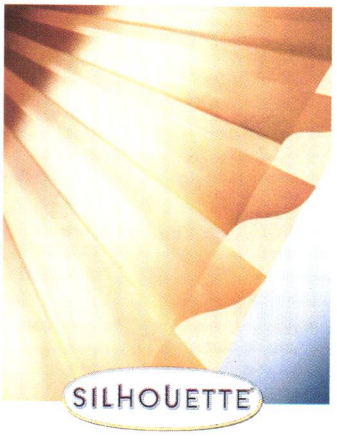
with the state of affairs in her bedroom.

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Odyssey

splashes of sunlight. Someone standing in front would also have seen, over on the right, the wooden back porch, with its grape arbor, where I spent so many summertime hours reading children's books and playing with toys of paper and cardboard and lead and rubber. The grown-ups of the house would rest and talk on this porch in the evening, and I can still see the arc of my father's spinning cigarette butt as he flicked it out into the twilight where the fireflies were beginning to glimmer.

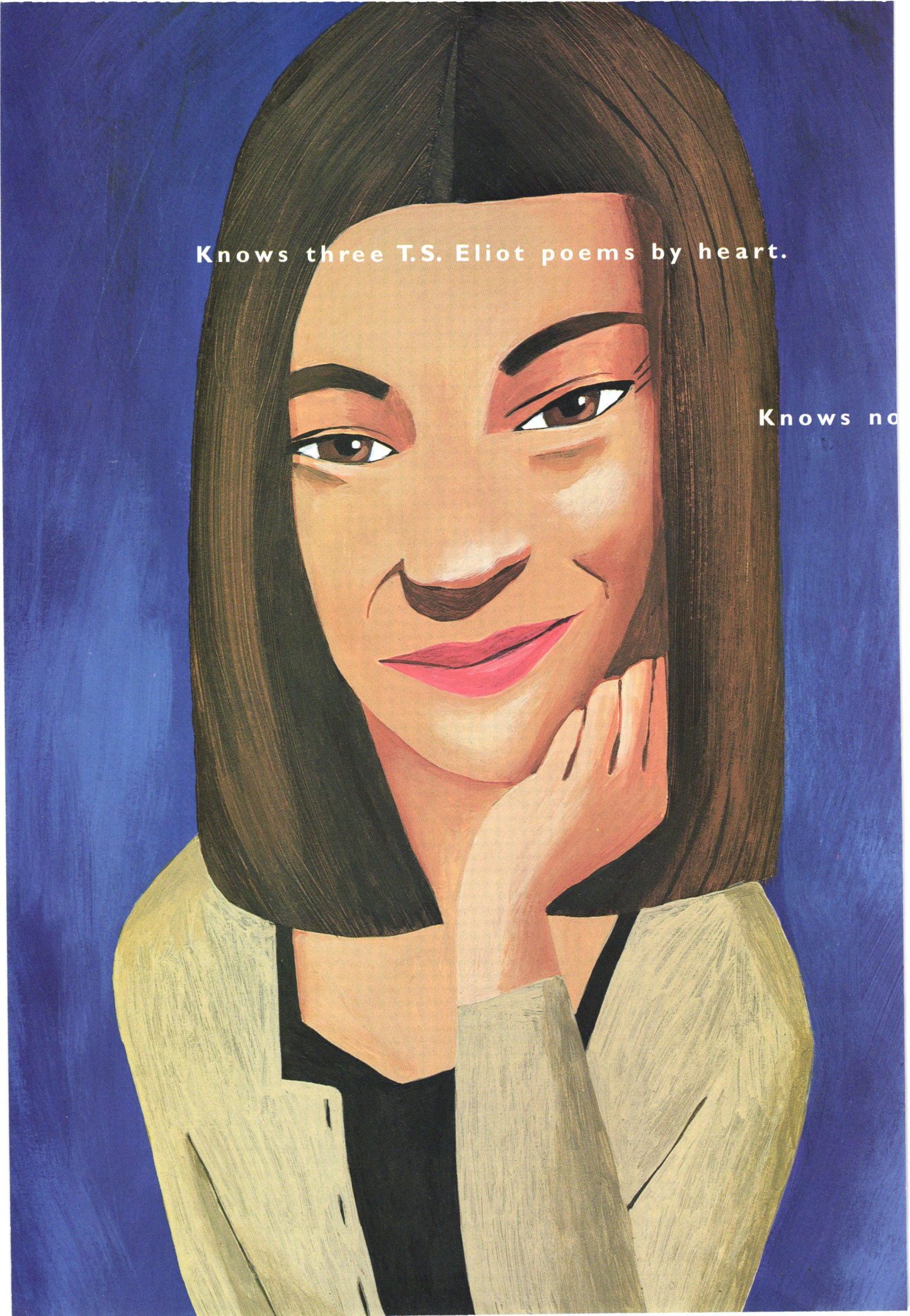
In the years 1932–45, the front door, unlike the door painted on the collectible block, had a single big pane, a broad letter slot, and a fanlight of stained glass, in which was embedded the number 117. A pattern of holes in the brickwork admitted air to the space beneath the porch, and there was a way in which the shining steel chute of the coal truck was extended from the truck body into a basement; many a time I pressed my face to the inside of the living-room window and watched the clattering river of coal pour into our cellar bin. Through this window, too, in December, the passing neighbors could see our Christmas tree, a modestly lit and decorated one by the high-Lutheran standards of the neighborhood. The house was narrow but long; the foyer led to a hallway that passed the living room and the music room to the right and entered the dining room, behind which lay the kitchen. More than forty years after leaving the house, I walked through its spaces again, and found them essentially unchanged but chillingly alien. The furniture, carpeting, and even the ceilings had been changed, and remembered niceties of woodwork and molding had been renovated away. A child spends much of his time on the floor, and the floors had lost the hospitable vastness that once accommodated so many bowling alleys and racetracks, and fields of imaginary combat. Only the windows, with their tall four-over-four panes, had held faithful to my childish perspectives: the same bubbles and warps of glass still tinged with small distortions the view out, where the grape arbor had vanished, and a house occupied what had been a vacant lot.

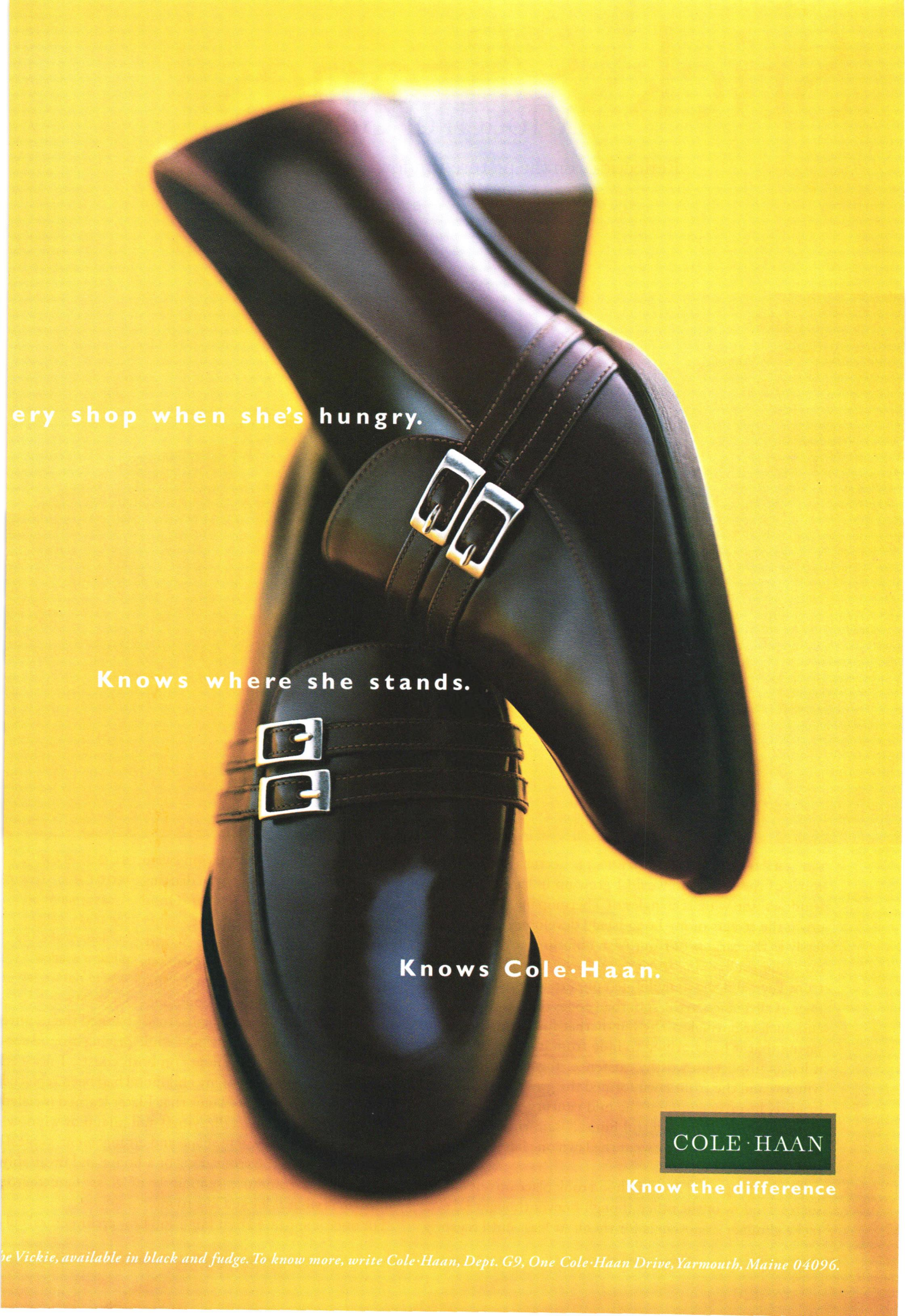
No doubt any blueprint I could drav of the floor plan would have its distor tions. There were a curved back stair way, and a bathroom, and a pantry somewhere. Two chimneys show on th roof, but where were any fireplaces? have trouble remembering the cellai but for the sagging shelves of peacl preserves and the old tub-shaped wash ing machine where my hand once go cruelly squeezed between the white rubber rollers. How strong and causti the soapsuds smelled! And toward th front there were the sinister, black coa bins, and the furnace my grandfathe would noisily shake down to begi every winter morning, while I was stil in bed. The house was composed less o spaces than of textures—rugs, wallpa pers—and voices and emotional auras which made one corner a favorite nook and another a hostile, menacing vacan cy. As Jasper Johns's painting suggests textures and elusive subjective figment overlie any house's blueprint.

His house, too, belonged to his grand father. It sat on the main street of th small South Carolina town of Allendale and he lived in it from the age of two t that of eight or nine. In making his blue print, his memory was aided by a photo graph a relative supplied; the house i this photograph startles us with its mas sive solidity and multiplicity of gable and balustrades. Its brick bulk is extend ed outward by a spacious southern porch We would not know the porch from th blueprint, nor the jaunty three-story tower that must have been enchanting for a little boy to climb and peer out of. A home is more than a house, and a paint ing is more than information: in both cases something physical is suffused by human life. Jasper Johns here as else where in his now extensive and various oeuvre gives us a sensation of exquisite balance. A number of disparate element have been brought to a point of medita tive calm. Past and future are both pre sent in the shallow, vibrant space. A flat blueprint holds the promise of three dimensional construction to come, and a flat canvas preserves the traces of the painter's activity—of his, we feel in this case, remembering.

John Updike's *book of essays,* Golf Dream *(Alfred A. Knopf), will be published this month*


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Sticks & Stones

A Touch of Glass

Reflections on the picture window

BY MICHAEL POLLAN



SUBURBAN MODERN
A descendant of the glass walls of Modernism, the picture window traded nature for neighbors.

NO ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL better expressed the spirit of the suburban world I grew up in than its picture windows: the wide rectangles of Thermopane that paraded down the streets of my Long Island development as relentlessly as the carpets of front lawn unfurling at their feet. In my mind the two institutions ran together. The unfenced front lawn and the unmullioned picture window were twin flags of allegiance to the suburban codes of like-mindedness and nuclear normalcy. The family that flew them both was saying that it had nothing to hide from its neighbors, that it led an inspection-worthy existence. Together the picture window and the front lawn formed the green stage and the brightly lit proscenium of the mid-century suburban idyll: "Behold this, our wonderful house!" said the front lawn, and then the big window went the lawn one better: "Behold this, our wonderful life!"

The better part of my childhood took place on one side of such a window or the other, though I never thought I'd ever feel a glimmer of nostalgia for them. At least until recently, when two pieces of information swam into my consciousness, one drifting down from the Counsels of Good Architectural Taste, and the other floating up from Developer World. The first datum was the curious fact, stumbled upon in a journal article, that Seaside, the neo-traditional community on Florida's Gulf Coast, had actually banned the picture window. The second was gleaned while driving around several affluent new developments on both coasts. I noticed that the picture window of my childhood had been replaced by something much more fancy that I later learned is called a "Signature Window": a dizzyingly tall pileup of windowpanes in every conceivable shape and arrangement, typically installed above the front door of a house and invariably crowned by a grandiose semicircle of glass. Contractor Palladian is what it looked like to me.

For once it appeared that High and Low architectural cul-



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ture had agreed on something: the Age of the Picture Window had passed, or been shoved, into history.

What I remember most about the picture windows of my childhood was the self-consciousness they inspired, regardless of whether you were inside or outside, looker or lookee. Sitting down to supper before the big plate of black glass, or gazing in at the neighbors sprawled in their living room, bathed in the aqueous glow of a sitcom, you felt caught on an uncertain edge dividing private from public space. It has often been said that the television programs of that era—the sixties—lorded over us an impossible ideal of family harmony and togetherness, but it seems to me the picture window was just as oppressive. Indeed, I occasionally wonder if the big window and the small screen didn't somehow feed off of each other, and if we might never have had to endure the one without the other. For what after all was the view looking into a picture window from outside at night supposed to be but a sixties' sitcom minus the sound track? Perhaps that explains why the aspect ratios, or proportions, of the two screens were almost identical.

Of course, the picture window was not originally intended as a broadcast medium. The picture in the picture window was supposed to be a landscape, not a street. The wide, fixed Thermopane units with their double-hung flankers on either side were the mass-market descendants of the horizontal ribbon windows and glass walls of Modernism, whose utopian promise had been to throw the dark boxy Victorian house open to nature. Or that was the idea, until we Americans decided we preferred our picture windows on the front of the house, where everybody could see them.

This was a peculiarly American move, one of those vernacular adaptations that sets architects' teeth on edge. *They must not get it!* architects fretted, deciding that anyone who installed plate glass on the street failed to understand what constituted a proper view or sense of privacy.

But maybe our parents did get it, or at least got exactly what they were looking for when they moved their picture windows around to the front of their houses. Those of us born in the suburbs may have found those Andersen units square and oppressive, a not-so-subtle vehicle of social conformity, but to the pioneers of the postwar developments, to people like my parents, the same window may have looked quite different. For anyone who had recently been catapulted from the gunmetal pavements of Brooklyn to the green fields of Levittown, there must have been something thrilling about drinking in big gulps of this new pastoral landscape through the broad expanses of glass. And the fact that the picture in the window was composed not of unspoiled nature but of a station wagon, a stamp of lawn, and the neighbor's split-level was nothing to regret; on the contrary, this was precisely the image of promised land they'd come here looking for.



SUBURBAN POSTMODERN A gesture for uneasy times, the relentlessly "individual" signature window is designed neither to be looked out of nor into.

I suspect that even the self-exposure of a picture window appeared differen then. As the example of the front lawn suggests, we Americans have alway liked to arrange our homes and garden for the admiration of the street. Thi would have been especially true of the first postwar generation, justly proud of the middle-class life they had se cured for their families. What bette way to celebrate one's arrival than t arrange a few cherished artifacts o that hard-won new life in the votiv space of a picture window? Perhap this explains why today it is on the least affluent suburban streets, where one's purchase on middle-class life i most tenuous, that you still find pic ture windows offering meticulously arranged tableaux to the passer-by. It' here that you can still find the curtain opened on a favorite lamp, a plant, pair of bookends holding a couple o

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Sticks & Stones

Reader's Digest's condensed classics—
mini-museum of our lives as we wa
others to regard them.

So what killed off the picture wi
dow? No doubt changes in the weath
of architectural fashion helped c
them in, but there's more to it tha
that. For one thing, the suburba
world that once looked out from, ar
into, the picture window has change
profoundly. As the problems of the ci
migrated to the suburbs, a window th
opened up one's home to the street w
bound to lose its appeal; a big plate
glass out front implied a confidence
community few of us feel anymor
Partly this is because the "normal" n
clear family is no longer the norm
American suburbs: today "marrie
with children" describes less than
quarter of new suburban household
The picture window told a story
likeness, when increasingly it is divers
ty that has come to define the mode
suburban experience. So Americar
began to draw the curtains across the
picture windows.

In the early eighties, two your
Florida architects named Andr
Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyber
set out to rebuild America's fracturir
suburbs by reviving some tradition
town-planning ideas. Operating on th
theory that the size and shape of wir
dows has always been critical in estab
lishing the character of public space
they wrote a design code for Seasid
stipulating that all windows would b
"square, or in vertical proportion," an
these five innocuous words helped se
the picture window's fate.

"If you put too much glass on th
façade of a house," Plater-Zyberk e
plained in a recent interview, "you'
going to feel so exposed that you'
want curtains. And if all you then hav
are blind walls facing the street, n
one is going to feel safe." Windows,
Jane Jacobs observed in *The Death an
Life of Great American Cities*, are th
eyes on a street; if you make them pi
ture windows, they're bound to sta
shut most of the time.

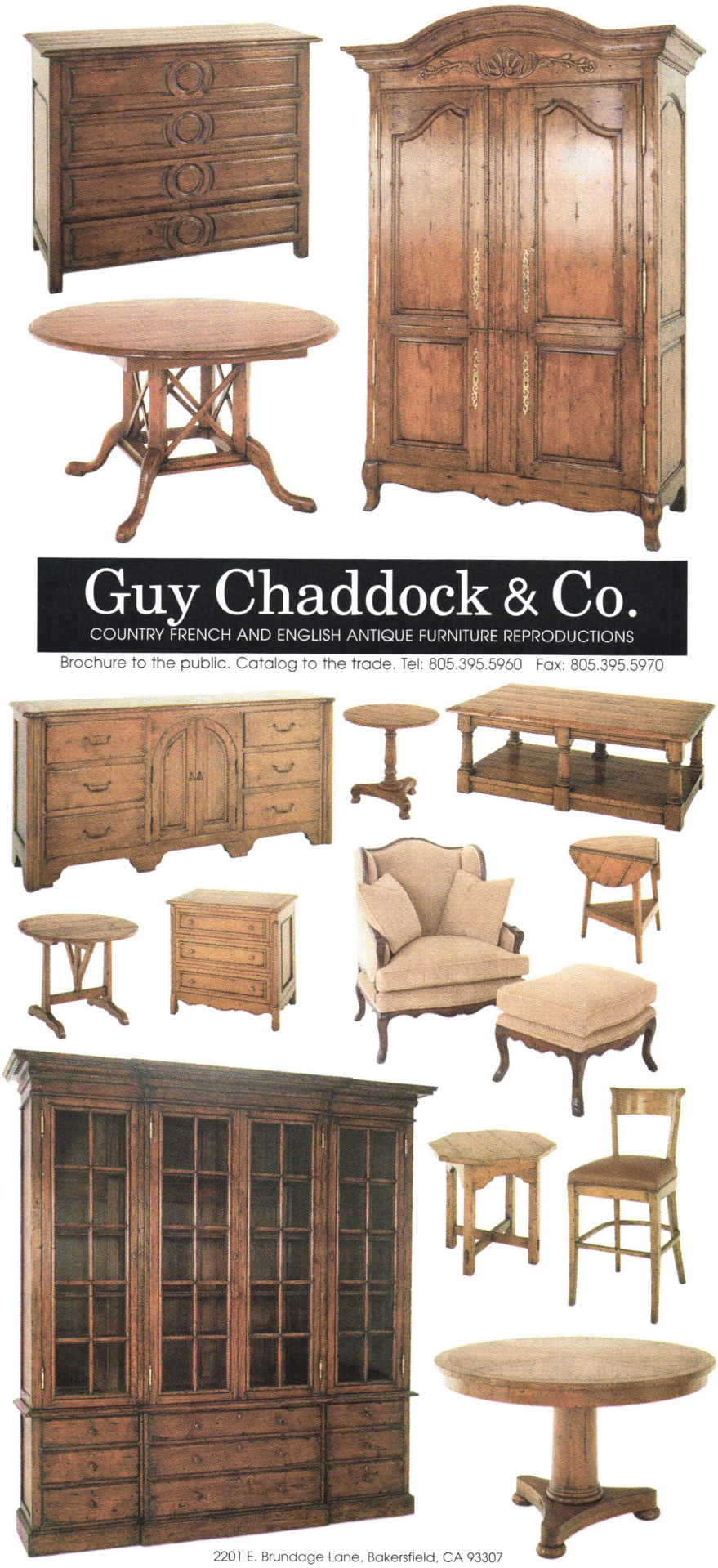
But at the same time that the s
called New Urbanists were returnir
to small vertical windows, the marke

place—of developers and contractors and window manufacturers—stepped forth with a more novel solution to the problem of the picture window: the showy signature windows that now began sprouting on American housefronts like glazed mushrooms. It is this window, I suspect, that will prove to be as fitting an emblem for the new suburban reality as the picture window was for the old.

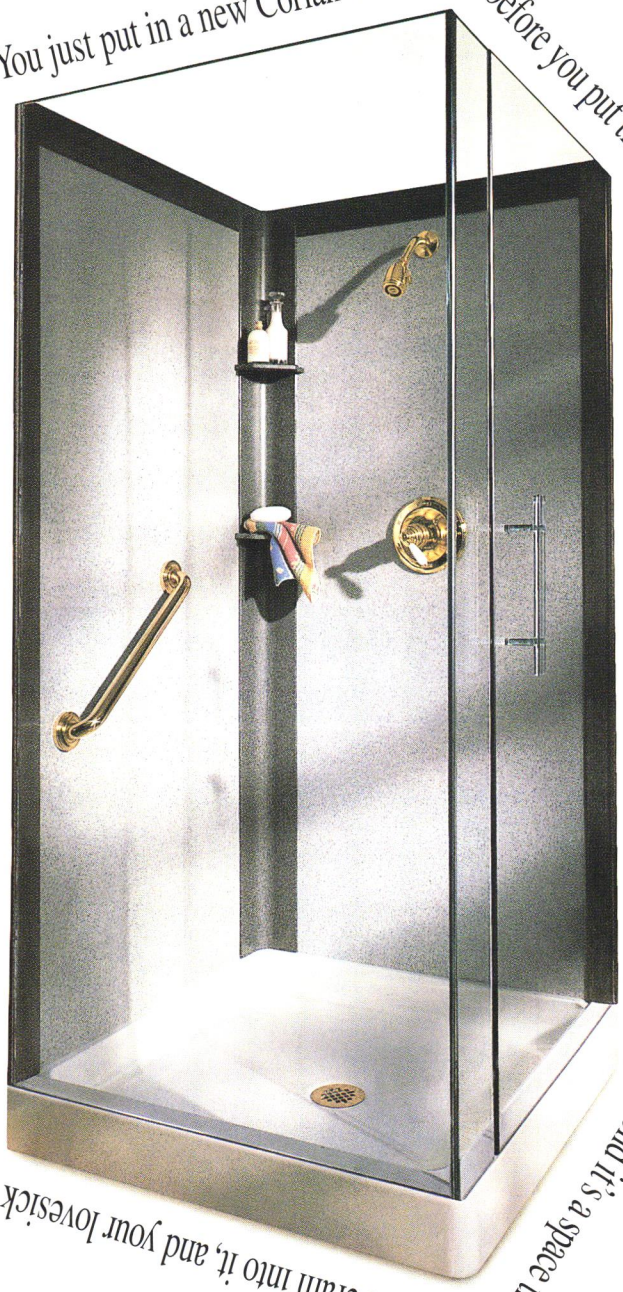
In the same way the picture window transformed a high-modernist idea into a mass-market status symbol, the signature window borrows just about every trick in the book of postmodern fenestration in order to make what the window catalogues like to call "a statement" on the front of a house. But while the cookie-cutter picture window made a virtue of conformity, the signature window is, as its name suggests, intended to promote "individuality"— every house can mix and match its own distinctive arrangement of fanlights and springlines, polygons and circles. For some reason, however, all these elaborately fenestrated housefronts wind up looking much the same. This is strictly the individuality of the salad bar.

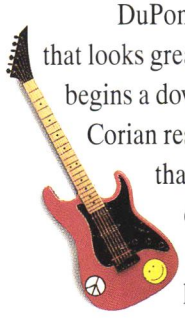
But what seems to me most telling about the signature window is that it is a window designed neither to be looked out of nor into. Because of its placement so high on the façade, it manages to impress the neighbors without engaging them at all. Like the fenestration on the front of a church, the signature window opens a house to the pure light of the sky while withdrawing it from the unhappy world of the street. In this the new window seems exactly the right gesture for these uneasy times, being a window that averts its gaze from both landscape and community, preferring instead to give itself to fantasy. The signature window may not quite stir nostalgia for the picture window, but it is enough to make you weep for the passing of a world that could have loved it.

Sticks & Stones" *is a regular column on man-made places.* **Michael Pollan** *is the author of* Second Nature, *and* In the Making, *a book about building that Random House will publish this winter.*



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BY JERRY ADLER



PHOTOGRAPH BY ILAN RUBIN

I AM LOOKING AT A SCREW. A flat-head wood screw, three inches long, zinc-plated #10, heavily threaded along the bottom two thirds—an object than which it is hard to imagine anything more ordinary, except, perhaps, a nail. Although this screw has a particular history, easily read in its appearance. The head, slightly squashed where I grabbed it with a pair of ten-inch locking-grip pliers; heavily encrusted with paint that shows in sedimentary layers of white, brown, and yellow where I had to chip it away to uncover the slot. The slot, battered and reamed and worn far beyond the point of uselessness. Do you have any idea how many revolutions it requires to remove a three-inch, #10 wood screw? Sixteen. I managed about one-and-three-quarters turns before the driver blade no longer gripped, leaving the rest of the screw to be extracted with pliers, a procedure that for frustration and sheer physical agony is matched in my experience only by the time in a beach house when I attempted to open a can of tomatoes with a butter knife and a flat rock. If I could have seen ahead to the finish, I could easily have paid someone else to do it and just scraped all the skin off my knuckles on the sidewalk instead.

I am a carpenter only by the most extreme necessity, although when you own a 120-year-old brownstone necessity can strike almost any time you grip a doorknob. The pointless jumble of interconnecting rooms that is the hallmark of brownstone design requires an extraordinary number of doors—about thirty on the four floors of my house, requiring for their hinges a total of some five hundred screws. These have proliferated in a fabulous variety of lengths, diameters, threads, and head configurations. Over time, as the wooden jambs and stiles of nineteenth-century carpentry have dried and shrivelled in the steam-heated atmosphere of the twentieth, many of these have fallen out and been replaced with ones a size or two larger. The process continues right up to

the present, so I am a person with a healthy appreciation for the role of the screw in American civilization. Screws hold things together, which is one of the three fundaments of construction, the others being cutting to shape and patching up mistakes with wood putty. I knew that when I finally extracted this screw, and seven more like it, from the hinges of a five-panel door that had unaccountably begun dragging on the carpet, they would be replaced with more or less the same thing. But I was wrong.

Wrong, because the wood screw as I and most Americans know it—the object purchased at the Home Depot in hanging packets of around a half dozen for 79 cents, stored in an old coffee can in the garage, and then installed with a bladed screwdriver ordinarily used for opening paint cans—is an artifact as primitive, obsolete, and inadequate to the demands of modern life as the two-tine fork. According to screw-industry observers, slotted screws continue to be made and sold only because they happen to mesh with the billion or so flat-bladed screwdrivers still around, which people keep buying out of habit and because they can be used to remove staples and pry open stuck windows.

I learned this from a catalogue, which is where I learn most useful things these days. The catalogue was from a company called McFeely's, and consisted of about fourteen pages of screws, plus some tools and other stuff. The screws McFeely's sells are like no other screws I have ever seen before. Instead of the standard slot or Phillips cross-head, they have little, square recesses in the head, and are driven with special screwdrivers with little, square knobs on the end. The advantage of this system, stripped of a certain degree of hardware mumbo jumbo about tensile strength, comes down to this: the driver doesn't slip off the screw head.

I went down to Lynchburg, Virginia, to talk to James C. Ray, who is the president of McFeely's. Ray is an engineer who formerly worked on power plants for nuclear submarines, a trade that he foresaw might have a limited future. A woodworker by hobby, he bought McFeely's in 1986, when it was primarily a supplier of fine hardwoods to craftsmen. Mailing slabs of wood around the country is a pretty marginal business, though, and soon Ray was looking around for products that would set his company apart. "I saw these square-drive screws lying around," he said, "and tried a few, and I said, 'This is it.' " Of course, Ray explained, if you're just taking screws out of an old hinge, a slipping screwdriver rarely causes damage beyond the occasional severed tendon. But if you're doing fine woodworking, it can easily ruin the surface of your project beyond the capability of wood putty to repair. Ray took a #8 screw and popped it onto a driver. It stuck there. He held the screw between his fingers and suspended the driver upside down, and it stayed stuck. Ray laid an oak board on a bench and drove the screw straight down into it, without even drilling a pilot hole. This is something that simply cannot be done with an ordinary screw. You cannot transmit enough torque through the screwhead to drive it into the board, because the driver slips off the screw. "You can see the potential here," Ray said mildly.

I sure could. It was the potential to never again face what I think of as the Screw Nightmare. The Screw Nightmare occurs when you're driving a fairly long, heavy-bodied screw into a thick piece of wood. You've got the screw pretty far down now, and it's starting to snug up a bit, but nothing to worry about, just a few more turns . . . except with each half-turn the insidious forces of friction grow incrementally stronger, and the screw gets harder and harder to drive. You know you should back it out and start over with a larger hole or a smaller screw, but you're too stubborn, until you reach a point at which it becomes not only impossible to drive any further but also, for some perverse reason of mechanics, impossible to back out. Impossible, at least, without stripping the slot. At which point the experienced carpenter will reach for his locking-grip pliers. And throw them across the room.

This almost never happens with square-drive screws, Ray assured me, because if you've even heard of them you're probably too smart to get yourself into that situation in the first place.

Well, I was totally sold, and I ordered a box of #10s and a couple of drivers and a few other things that I don't especially want to have to justify to my wife just now, but I'll get to them later on.

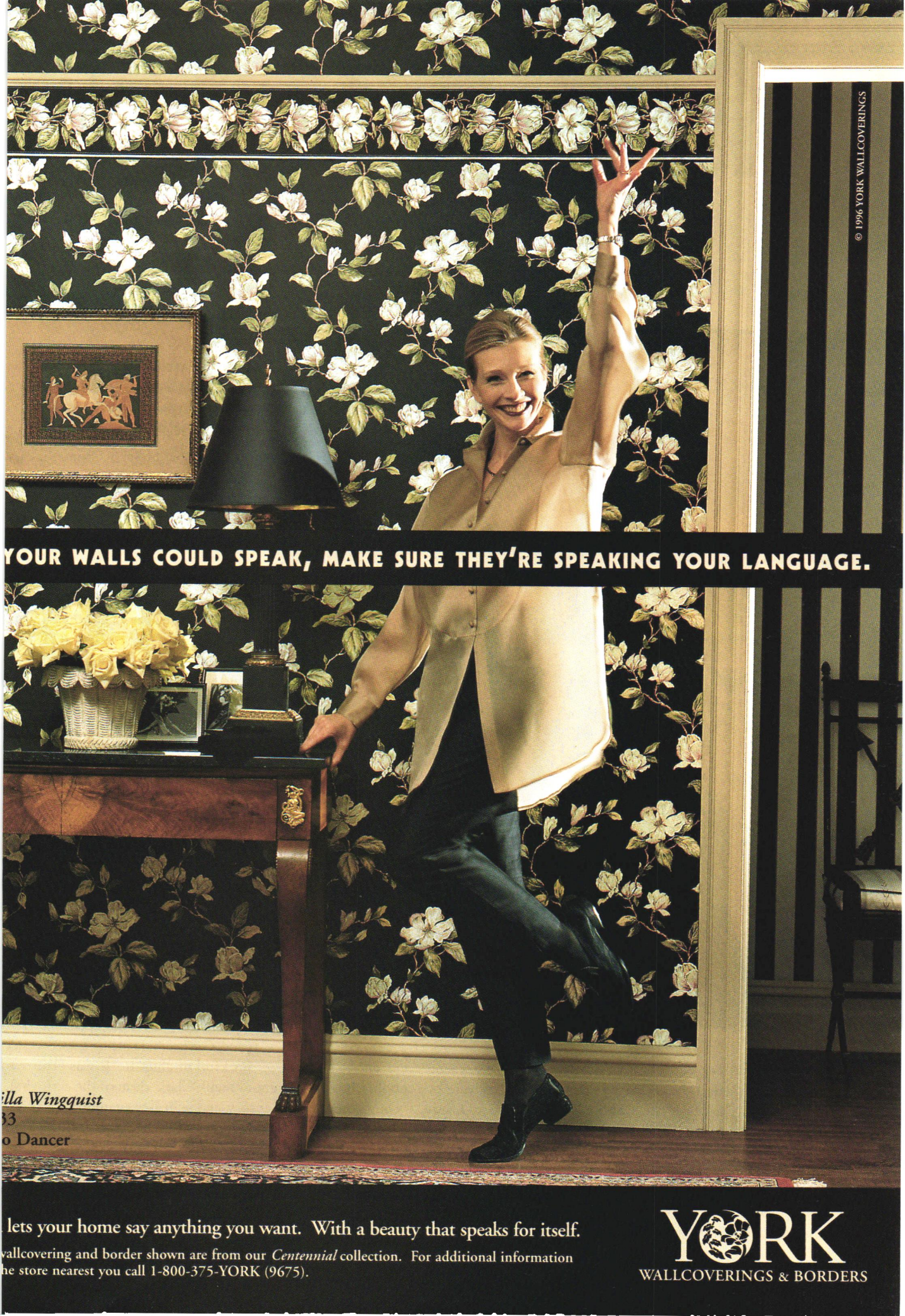
And I learned a lot more about screws while I was at it. I learned that the Phillips Screw Company—there really is one, although it doesn't actually make screws, it just designs them and collects royalties on the patents—has developed a new head, with interior ribs, that sticks almost like a square drive, although I haven't seen them for retail sale anywhere. I discovered that, apart from the different kinds of heads, there are different kinds of *threads* that make screws easier to drive and less likely to pull out. And I learned, finally, that all those years of scraped knuckles really were in vain; that the reason I never seemed to get any better at driving a screw had to do more with the inadequacy of my tools and materials than innate stupidity; and that anything can be improved, albeit at the cost of having to buy a new set of tools that can't even be used to break apart hamburger patties that have gotten stuck together in the freezer.

And now that I've got my square-drive screws, you can bet I'm going to put that door back just as soon as my knuckles heal up.

The wood screw is an artifact as inadequate to the demands of modern life as the two-tine fork

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Jerry Adler *is a senior editor at* Newsweek. *His hardware column will appear regularly.*



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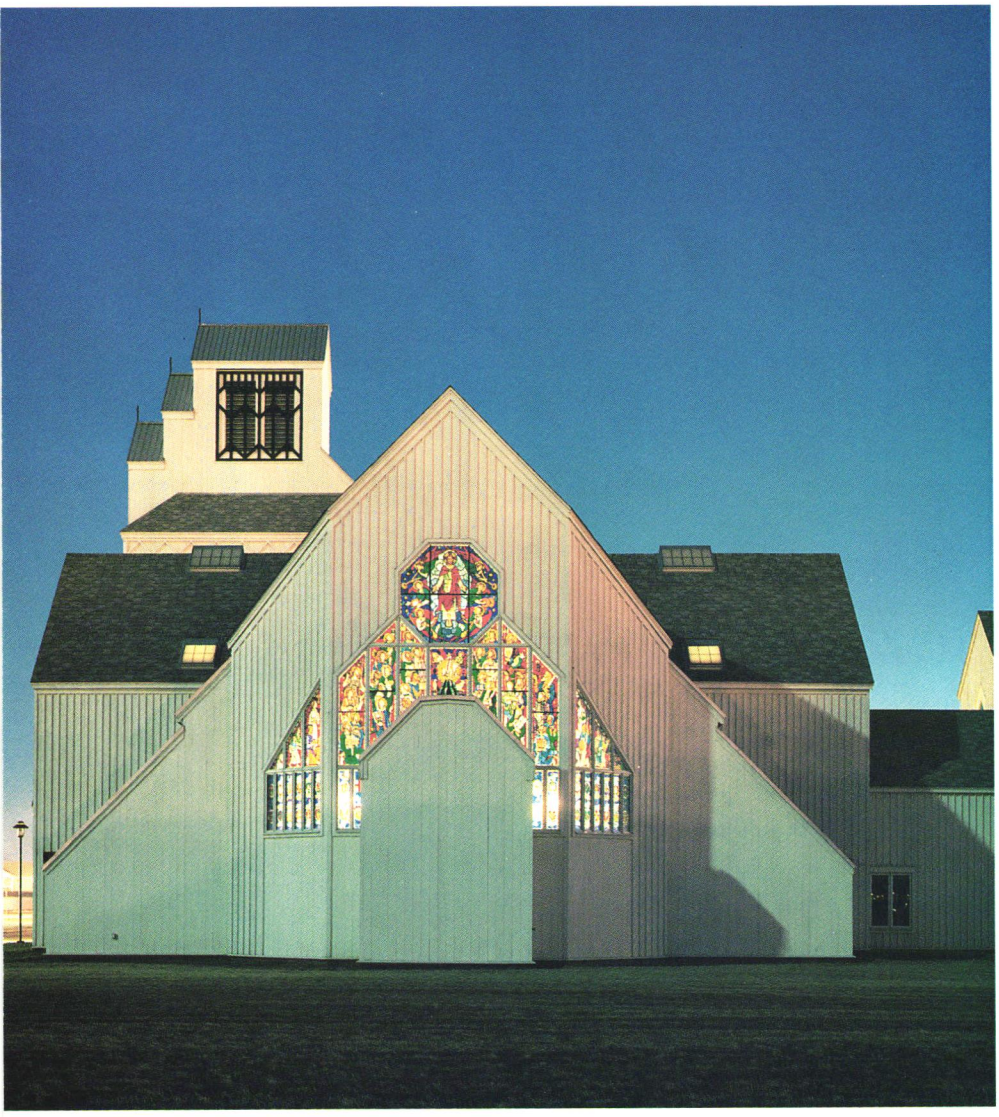
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Song of the Plains

An austerely elegant cathedral soars above the North Dakota prairie

BY CAROL FLAKE



KEEPING FAITH The bell tower suggests a grain elevator, and the board-and-batten building, which includes offices and schoolrooms, a barn.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RUSSELL KAYE

THE TALL, DISTINCTIVE BELL TOWER of Gethsemane Episcopal Cathedral gleams like a beacon on the flat plains of Fargo, North Dakota, a place where long winters and harsh winds call for a strong counterforce of faith. Ethereal but sturdy, the tri-level tower suggests a grain elevator where a harvest of souls might be stored. Although the whitewashed board-and-batten structure is a startling departure from the traditional stone cathedrals of the Great Plains, there is a comforting familiarity to its outlines. And while Gethsemane appears completely at home in its Dakota setting, it is also profoundly modern in conception and design—the result of a remarkable collaboration between a well-known, venturesome team of architects, Charles Moore and Arthur Andersson, and a congregation willing to take chances.

Gethsemane is actually a new incarnation of an older cathedral. When the original stone building in downtown Fargo caught fire in 1989, the congregation salvaged what it could. The pews, miraculously, had not been damaged, and portions of the stained-glass windows were still intact. A line from T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* seemed to apply: "These fragments I have shored against my ruins." It was difficult at first for the grieving congregation even to think about rebuilding, much less to consider that its cherished cathedral might rise in a new place and in a new and bolder form.

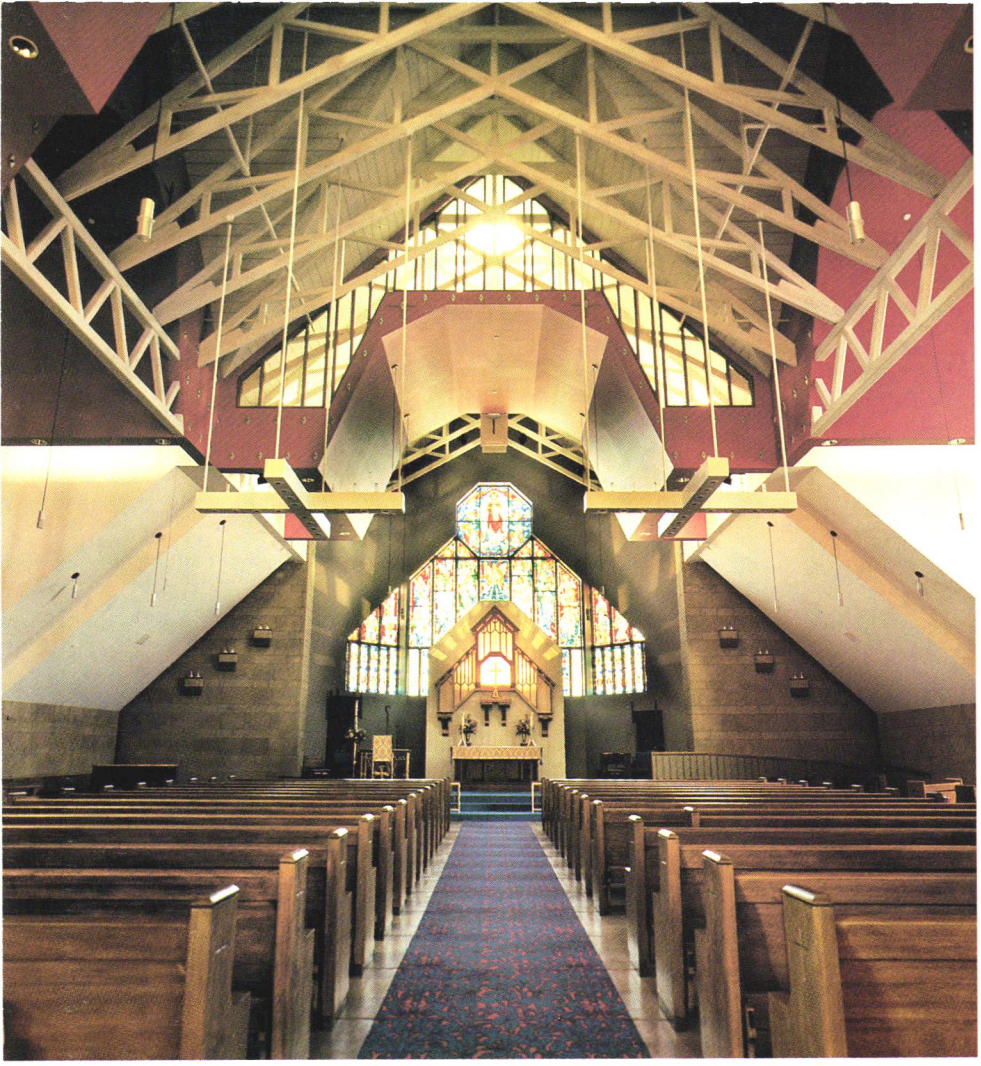
As the church members settled into temporary quarters in a warehouse-like building south of town, they soon came to realize how much their worship had depended on a special, sacred space. Gethsemane, they knew, wasn't cut out to be a storefront kind of church. "It was claustrophobic," recalls Reverend Frank Clark, dean of the cathedral. "Our liturgy is very sensory, and light is very important to us. There is a sense of time of day and time of year and the kind of light that comes in. And we live in a latitude that is particularly sensitive to the length of day and changes in light."

Huddled in their harshly lit, makeshift church, the congregation made two key decisions. The first was to move to a tract on the prairie several miles south of downtown, near new sub-



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SAVING GRACE A rich red canopy, which the architects call a "cloud cover," arches over the nave. Gethsemane, dominated by skylights and scissors trusses, incorporates stained glass and pews salvaged from the old cathedral. A tiny, almost medieval chapel, right, beyond the sanctuary, opens on a cloistered courtyard.

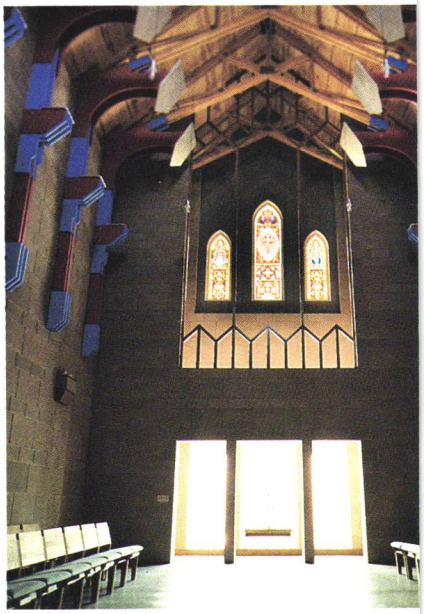
divisions where most of Fargo's growth was taking place. "That was a pretty wild idea," says Marian Prior, who has served for decades in the educational work of the church. In recent years, a number of churches began to settle into the neighborhood, and that once lonely stretch of south Fargo now resembles a kind of campus of religious diversity.

The second major decision was to find an architect of consequence. "We wanted a building that would stand out," says the dean. "We wanted architecture that fit the area, but we wanted it to be noticeable." The church members also had to overcome the Episcopal bent for quiet decorum and do something bold and beautiful that would beckon potential new members. Just as important, though, they wanted to build a "church home," as Prior puts it—a building in keeping with their vision of their mission and their identity as a church and as a community.

Although no one had seen a building designed by Charles Moore and his younger partner, Arthur Andersson, who were based in Austin, Texas, they were impressed by the collaborative way their firm worked with clients. Somewhat frail, Moore (who died in 1993) was intrigued by the idea of building a cathedral from the ground up. As Moore's health worsened, Andersson, who has family ties to the Dakotas, took over even more of the design process.

Moore's penchant for whimsy and fractured classicism (evident in the Wonderwall at the 1984 New Orleans World's Fair) was transmuted in Gethsemane by the dramatically somber setting of the Great Plains and by the collective dreams and ideas drawn from the congregation. "It was," Andersson says, "a process of healing for the church and of discovery for us as architects." During four months of workshops, he and Moore learned about the needs and leanings of the congregation. As the headquarters of the state diocese, the building would include offices for the bishop. As a school during the day, it would have to house several classrooms.

"They encouraged us to come up with our wildest ideas," recalls Harry Hawken, who worked on the building committee. The need for storage space for chairs, for example, resulted in exterior buttresses that jut out from the great hall. There was a suggestion for a chapel for more intimate gatherings. As conceived by the architects, the tiny chapel, with its high walls and narrow space, hidden beyond the main sanctuary, has a particularly medieval feel, an impression reinforced by its opening onto a cloistered courtyard. Bright red-and-blue support beams offer potential pedestals for statuary when the budget allows. The courtyard, an unthinkable frill in North Dakota's severe climate, was Moore's most controversial suggestion to the planning committee, says Andersson. But the light it would afford



through large windows to adjoining rooms and walkways won over skeptical congregants.

During the design process, the architects constructed pull-apart models that church members could rearrange in various configurations. The bell tower, for example, kept shifting its position until it wound up above the entrance vesti-


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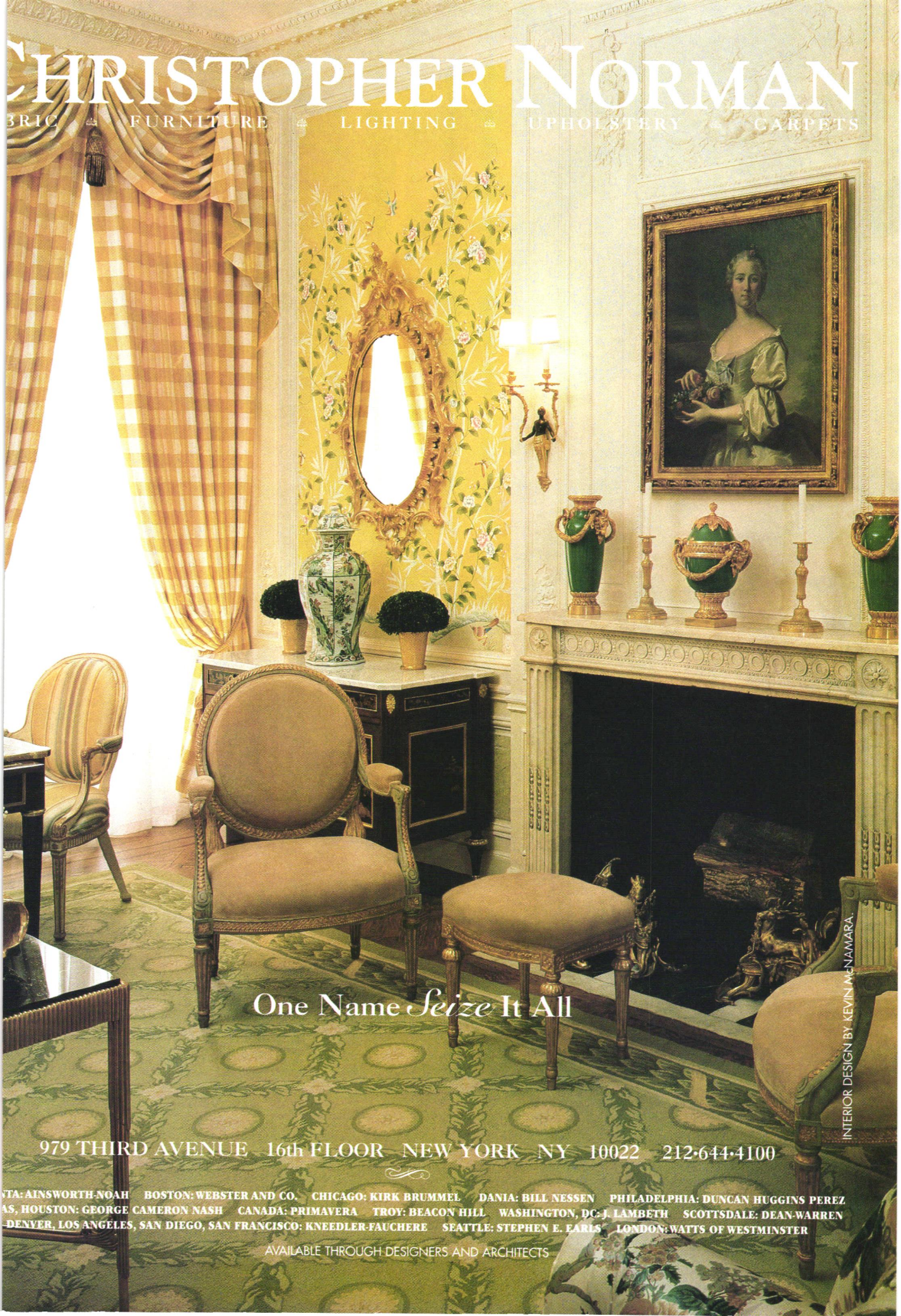
bule. There, as a prelude to the narthex it suggests a comfortable balance between the formal worship space of the sanctuary to the right, and the more informal fellowship space of the great hall to the left. The sanctuary and the great hall are divided by transparent screens, a mere illusion of boundary, that can be retracted to extend the sanctuary for special occasions.

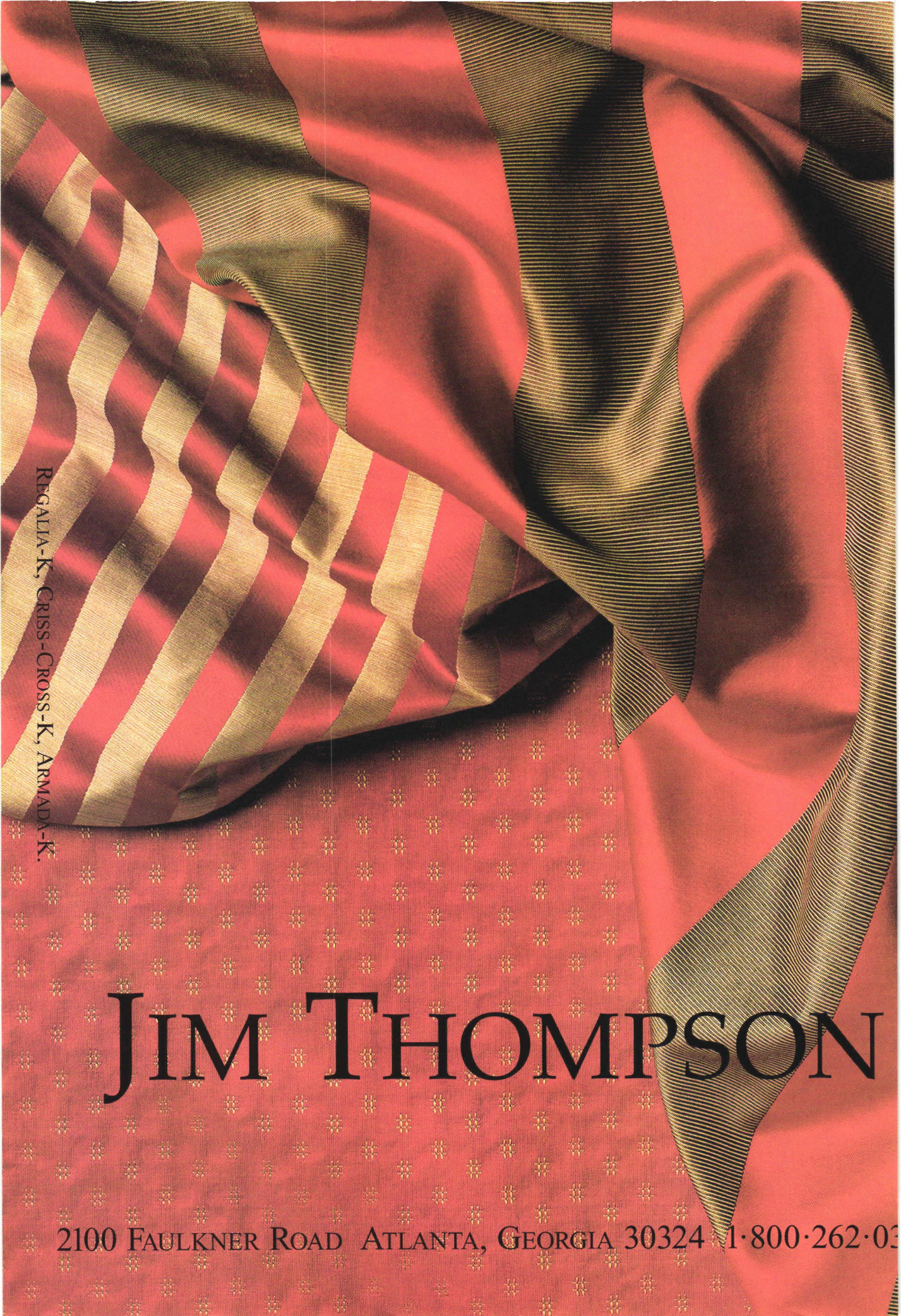
Church members like to refer to the style that resulted as "prairie Gothic." The cathedral's rather stark white exterior, which can take on an otherworldly lightness in the snow, contrasts with the substantial stone-colored walls of the interior, warmed by stained glass and other rich accents of color. Budget constraints dictated poured concrete blocks rather than real stone for inner walls and floors, although a subtle pinkish-gold tint added to the mix lends a soft glow to the surface, suggesting that worshippers are surrounded by buffed stone rather than mere concrete.

For accent as well as acoustics, the architects added a rich red canopy of painted gypsum wallboard, which they refer to as a "cloud cover," stretched beneath the skylights, barnlike beams, and scissors trusses supporting the roof. Along the far end of the great hall is what Moore called a "memory palace," decorated by stained-glass windows from the old church. New windows depict the church's history, beginning with early meetings more than a century ago in a railroad car, the new building rising up as the latest stage in the saga.

Despite the austere elegance of its outlines, Gethsemane radiates a sense of warmth, of shelter from the storm and food for the soul. It's the kind of place that lifts your spirits. As Marian Prior says, "The biggest lesson that we got was that it doesn't hurt to dream. This was a dream that worked. When I look at the church, I think, *This is who we are.*" For all its startling boldness, the cathedral suggests a building strongly rooted in the needs, experiences, and aspirations of its worshippers.

"House of Worship" *is an occasional column.* **Caro Flake** *is the author of* Redemptorama: Culture, Politics, and the New Evangelicalism.


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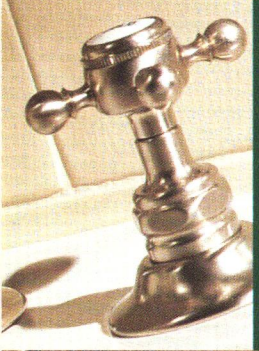
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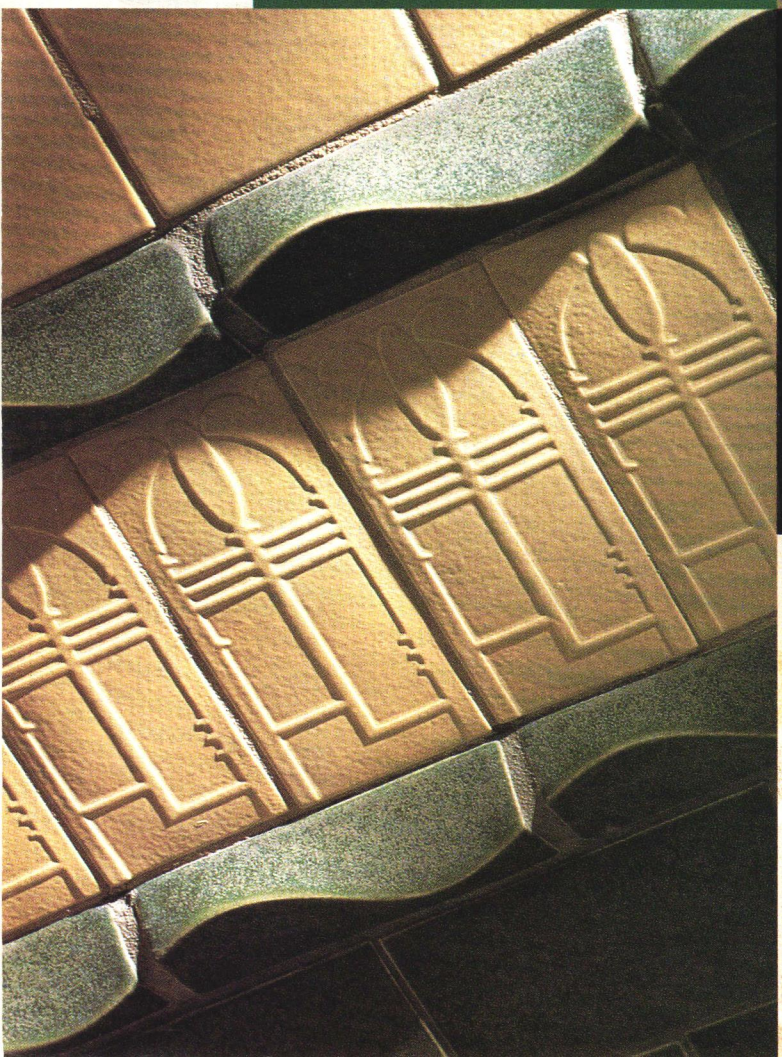
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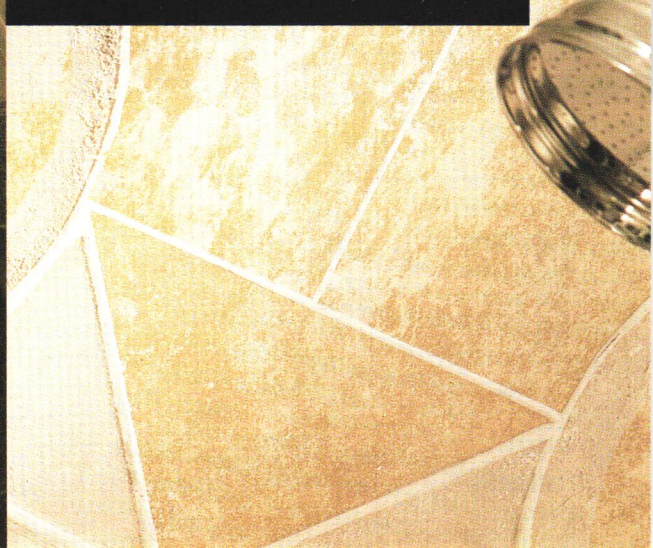
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Dig It

Adventures in the Peony Trade

Forget class struggle and the Cultural Revolution.
China's greatest export may be the tree peony

BY PATTI HAGAN



ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES MARSH

AMERICANS—PERENNIALLY—GARDEN CHINESE. Our border mainstays—buddleias, wisterias, abelias, forsythias, clematis, weigelas, lilies, balloon flowers, bleeding hearts, peonies, tree peonies—are nowadays garden variety thanks to the tough-guy heroics of nineteenth-century Great White Plant-Hunters in the hire of European nurseries, botanical gardens, and arboreta: men "unnerved by the sheer immensity of China's flora," according to Tyler Whittle in *The Plant Hunters*, but nonetheless undaunted.

Nearing a millennium, Western plantsmen are again being drawn to China, to hunt for updated and outdated versions of many of the same plants, especially China's King of Flowers, the tree peony. In August 1995 I joined an expedition from White Flower Farm (of Litchfield, Connecticut) to the Sino-center of the peony world, led by Steve Frowine, WFF's vice president and director of horticulture. Unnerved by the sheer perversity of China's bureaucracy, I went disguised as a "housewife," minder of peonies (herbaceous and tree) in my Brooklyn, New York, garden. (An honest attempt to travel to the fabled Mother of Gardens as a writer was red-flagged by the travel agency in New York, which substituted the harmless "housewife." Housewives get China visas—no problem; such suspect types as garden writers do not.) The subterfuge was not unprecedented. In the 1840s Robert Fortune, the Scot credited with capturing alive some three dozen of the finest tree peonies ever to ship out from China—including *Paeonia suffruticosa 'Robert Fortune'*—had had to disguise himself, as Chinese. Had he not observed "the Chinese government has been always so jealous of foreigners entering the country," I could have.

Never have I allowed my daily read through too many newspapers to cloud my abiding images of China, imprinted from plant explorers' nineteenth-century dispatches out of

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SOME OF THE

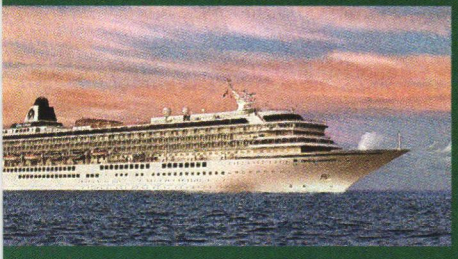
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the Celestial Empire. Despite current reports of the astonishing magnitude of government-sanctioned environmental degradation, I harbored green thoughts of China. I actually imagined people still gardened there. Even as the Chinese have retained their historic suspicion of foreigners, plant addicts from the West, such as my Housewife self, have retained their romantic notions of the place Robert Fortune celebrated: "Few can form any idea of the gorgeous and striking beauty of these azalea-clad mountains . . . clematises, wild roses, honeysuckles, the Glycine [wisteria] . . . and a hundred others, mingle their flowers with them, and make us confess that China is indeed the 'central flowery land.' " I was eager to visit the ancestor plants of my own and White Flower Farm's peonies.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY TOM WOLFF

With the blessing of White Flower Farm's president, Eliot Wadsworth II, Steve Frowine had plotted a highly specific plants mission: he carried a list of thirty-five peonies, *Paeonia lactiflora* (herbaceous or *shaoyao*) and *P. suffruticosa* (tree or *moutan*) compiled by a peony professor in China. Three years' reconnaissance by e-mail and fax and an in-country scout had preceded him. The success of Frowine's mission hinged on two "secret weapons," his China-born wife, Yun, and her sister, the peony scout Ping, of Beijing.

The plant-hunter from New England established his northernmost headquarters at the Beijing Friendship Hotel, an elaborately landscaped, palatial secular temple dating from the Mao dynasty (1954), that operates under the motto: "The Friendship All The People Have Been Longing For." The hotel brochure promised: "Our nice gardens will always keep your memory fresh in your mind." And indeed, I cannot forget their modern gardens, almost the only kind we saw, thousands of potted plants arranged on top of the soil there and in other public places—Victorian carpet bedding with Chinese characteristics. Chinese gardening amounted to seasonal pot-shuffling. The incarcerated-plant hit, China summer of 1995, was purple loosestrife (*Lythrum*) prominently displayed in glazed ceremonial pots. Ironically, White Flower Farm had just expelled purple loosestrife from its catalogue, after thirteen states had declared it a noxious weed.

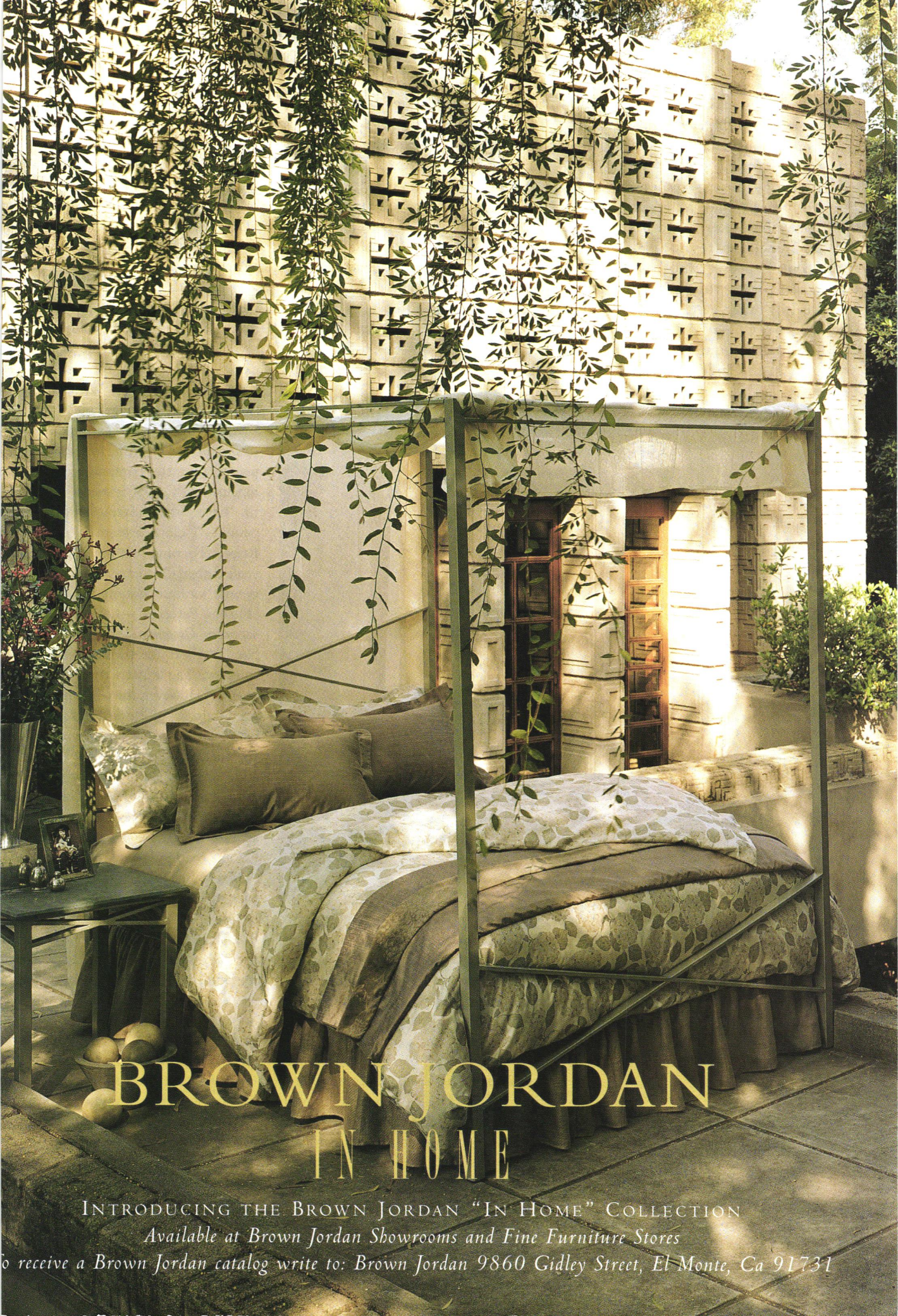
It was but a white-knuckler of a day's drive from Beijing to the Peony Center of the Universe. The road did not pass through any central flowery farmland but a grim, dusty, unbeauteous landscape dotted with warrens of brick dwellings and brick kilns. This people's road carried the history of locomotion: laborers on the daily long march, bicycles and trucks amok, mule chariots, domestic freelance ungulates, traffic-inured sheep. Wild as the ride was, it seemed rather tame by contrast to Robert Fortune's nineteen swashbuckling years pursuing China's flowers while being pursued by stone-throwing mobs, robbers, and pirates.

Frowine had spent many months on the e-mail trail, following false peony

Unnerved by the perversity of China's bureaucracy, I went disguised as a 'housewife,' minder of peonies in my Brooklyn garden

leads. He had persisted unto 1995, because WFF, in order to introduce 150 new items in each catalogue, has 1,000 plants in trials at any time, and he was eager to enter peonies-with-Chinese passports in them. "The Chinese have so many varieties of *moutan*—tree peony. They have the best ones in the world and know more about them than anyone else," he said.

Several times since the early nineteenth century, someone has announced that the tree peony is finally coming into its own in the American garden—and then it doesn't. The reason Charles Mason Hovey gave in the *American Gardener's Magazine and Register* in 1863 still stands: "It is too slow a plant for us Americans. We must have something . . . which can be had in full bloom and sells cheap." Thirty years ago, Amo Pettingill, the *nom de jardin* of William F. Harris (White Flower Farm's cofounder with his wife, Jane Grant), had dithyrambs about "the King of Flowers" in *The White Flower Farm Garden Book*



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his nursery's autobio. Pettingill crowned *Paeonia suffruticosa* "the most desirable plant in horticulture," though he had trouble growing it. After visiting Japanese peony growers, responsible for all the tree peonies, all grafted, sold in the United States, Pettingill concluded: "A Tree Peony's principal disease is people"—people who haven't a clue how to treat this "plaything of the wealthy" that easily lives a hundred years—in China.

This time White Flower Farm headed straight to China—through the back door. "In China the only way to get things done is back door," Frowine observed. "Yun and Ping know all the back doors." Ping had traced the peony brokerage chain from Beijing to the actual peony farmers in the middle of the Middle Kingdom. She informed the Connecticut office that the Chinese were growing their tree peonies *on their own roots,* a practice Frowine described as "very radical. No place in the United States grows *moutans* on their own roots." (White Flower Farm sells "3- or 4-year-old grafts" on borrowed *shaoyao* roots.) "Own-root plants are much more vigorous and grow faster," he added. (Of course I had to go to China to find out it's not my fault my two grafted Japanese tree peonies grow so leisurely.)

Our arrival in what I shall call Peony City was in the off-season. The peony flats extended drably as far as the eye could see: peony farms, vegetable farms, mixed peony/veggie farms, a few trees. At times I had to remind myself that this expedition ultimately had to do with gardening: remind myself that though Americans garden Chinese—the Chinese don't garden. Flowers are business, and we had reached China's "production base of peony commodity." Not the least bit gardenesque, lines of peonies were interplanted with onions and leeks for protection against root-rotting disease.



Of course I had to go to China to find out it's not my fault my two grafted Japanese tree peonies grow so leisurely

A peony technician from Peony Co. No. 1 explained that the "One Hundred Flowers Garden" had been established four hundred years earlier by the Ming dynasty. More recently Chairman Mao's 1956 gardening Thought—"Let a hundred flowers bloom"—had been superseded in 1966 by the Thoughts that launched the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Red Guards zealous to eradicate the Four Olds—evidence of China's "feudal" past—had come after the peonies, symbols of imperial extravagance. "Some varieties got destroyed by the Red Guards. The technicians hid the real good ones at home during the Cultural Revolution. They saved the others," the man recalled, "by explaining that all the roots can be used for medicine. We said, 'We don't use for flowers, but for Chinese medicine.' "

In a country that relies on numerology to organize everything, it was to be expected that the company would have nine peony "Colour Systems." It claimed to have the mythical blue tree peony—"Colour System No. 8"—that Robert Fortune had failed to find 150 years earlier. Of course, none of the nine peony "Colour Systems" nor the nine "Flower Patterns"—Lotus-like, Sweet-scented *Osmanthus*-holding, Silk-ball-like, Pavilion-like—were apparent, because we had missed the "Grain Rain Season." However, the company brought the Grain Rain Season to life on video, panning the peony flats during the April International Peony Flower Fair, when, according to the company booklet, "there are so many peony flowers . . . blazing with colours that your eyes can not take them all in . . . a magnificent scene with flowers like an ocean and people like surfs."

Marathon banquets have been mandatory to doing business in China since before the local invention of pasta. Clearly, Chairman Mao's 1948 call to the cadres to "oppose extravagant eating and drinking" in the "struggle for the abolition of the feudal system" had not taken root. The protocols of flower trading in China still require interminable hours at table, in windowless, flowerless, decorless rooms, waiting for the hosts to bring up business. The while it was important to keep up discerning peony commentary—and keep on eating. Well into the second hour of the second banquet, the peony company actually began talking peonies.

Ping took high-speed notes, produc-


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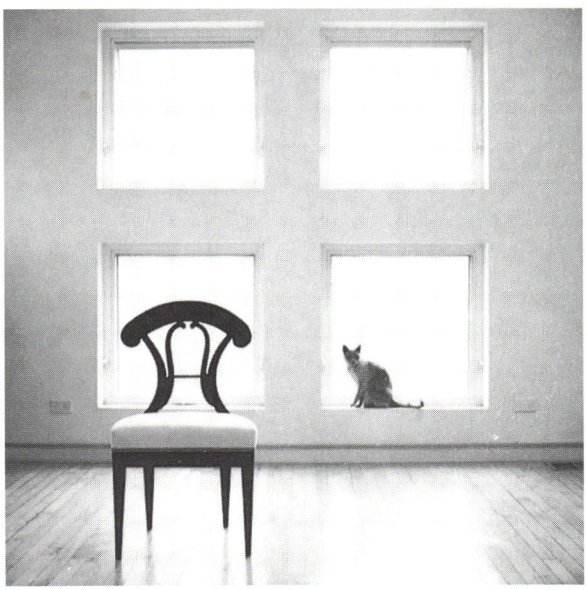
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ing a document of some calligraphi beauty. White Flower Farm's thousand of peonies would jet to New York i September, labeled in pinyin in perma nent ink. Frowine tried hard to impres upon the Chinese the necessity o sending exactly the colors, varieties and grades ordered. Left to their ow devices, the Chinese substitute at wil a practice confounding to Whit Flower Farm's sales ethic.

At the end of the discussion the Chi nese peony-growers turned their atten tion to the English-language note-take the Housewife in their midst, and the in comprehensible name of this magazine The harder Yun Frowine worked to ex plain *House & Garden*, the more puzzle the Chinese became. Finally, she an nounced: "*House & Garden* is a har concept—because in China people don' have a house or a garden."

It is odd that a country that has so vig orously struggled to wipe out its feuda past misses no opportunity to remin you of it. We left the "No. 1 *Mouta* Town in the World" (so said a ston tablet donated "by the last Emperor' brother") the same way we had come, i a car under the control of a moder dragon driver who kept the life forc going through a daylong road mêlée.

After the peony lowlands, then th flat North China Plain, I needed to hi the Wall. While astronauts hav thrilled to seeing the Great Wall fron the moon, I had thrilled to the notio of seeing it through a hand lens, t botanizing the Great Wall—not a 3,930 miles of it, but the stretch aroun Ba-da-ling, 47 miles northwest of Bei jing, in the northern hills. Frowine ha not thought much of my idea: "Th Great Wall is not that fascinating botan ically. It's greatly disturbed."

Arrival at the world's greatest wal was acutely underwhelming. We ap peared to have reached a tacky them park: a great parking lot bordered b junk souvenir stands and pushy hawk ers. Mongol warriors—ghoulish statue with ashen-brown faces—snarled dow from the Wall and guarded the en trance to the stairs up. Colored pen nants added the look of a used-car lot. despaired that even so famed a construc



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BY AKIKO BUSCH



ILLUSTRATION BY TOM CHRISTOPHER

IN THE HOUSE I GREW UP IN, news of the world arrived through a kitchen wall phone, a household staple of the '60s. Designed to complement the wall-hung cabinets, it was an artifact of domestic efficiency that acknowledged both the conversational and housekeeping needs of the homemaker. But in my house, the white kitchen wall phone served another purpose as well. In those days before answering machines, it sounded out those uncertain rituals of human communication. News arrived irregularly. You got the call or you didn't, and uncertainty attached itself to the way people conveyed their thoughts. Like the box itself, suspended precariously on the wall, its clearest message was that words could come unpredictably and out of nowhere.

Such subtle lessons about human communication seem outdated today. By 1995, 16 million American families had more than one phone line. These multiple lines, along with our car phones, cell phones, voice mail, e-mail, and fax machines, allow the steady flow of information in and out of our lives. That information is so constantly, uniformly, and regularly available has become essential to our idea of domestic comfort. And with good reason. Such information offers security; beepers, answering machines, and call waiting, for example, all help parents keep track of their kids, and few things give parents a greater feeling of security than knowing their kids are safe.

Fred Voit, a telecommunications analyst at the Yankee Group, a research firm in Boston, observes that between 40 and 50 percent of American households will have two or more residential lines by the year 2000. These lines, he says, will be used for everything from data transmission to on-line services to home security systems. The extra lines used purely for conversation, he adds, simply make family life easier; call waiting can be disruptive and irritating, and multiple phone lines allow family members to make and receive calls without getting in one another's way.

It's hard to complain about telecommunications that make us more available to one another; all the same, it's with

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a sense of loss that I realize my children will probably never run to answer a ringing phone with much conviction. They know a machine is there to take the call. Nor will they ever wonder who has been trying to reach them, or ruminate about missed calls and lost chances. That insignificant and ordinary information can take on a sense of urgency may be one of life's smaller lessons, but they probably won't learn it from the evocative silence of a phone that has just stopped ringing. They may yet learn that spontaneity and serendipity are an essential part of human communication, but phone calls just caught or missed won't be what tells them that.

It was the absolute unreliability of the standard telephone that transforme it into an accomplice in our emotional lives

It was the absolute unreliability of the standard telephone, vintage '60s and '70s, that transformed it from a simple domestic appliance to an inevitable accomplice in our emotional lives. Emotional collusion with the telephone was the norm; how could you not detest a telephone that didn't take messages for you in your absence? Yet when a call you were anticipating arrived, it could elicit anything from satisfaction to bliss. Rage, resentment, rapture—all of these were feelings you might legitimately harbor toward a telephone.

The phones we use today, of course, are more reliable instruments; they are so competent they answer themselves; they can identify the caller, or forward the call, or tell the caller to wait. And their capabilities only multiply. Voit anticipates the technologically advanced house in which the phone will also operate heating, lighting, and air-conditioning. Even today, screen phones are being tested, allowing users to access electronic mail, headline news, sports scores, and stock information on monitors through their phone lines.

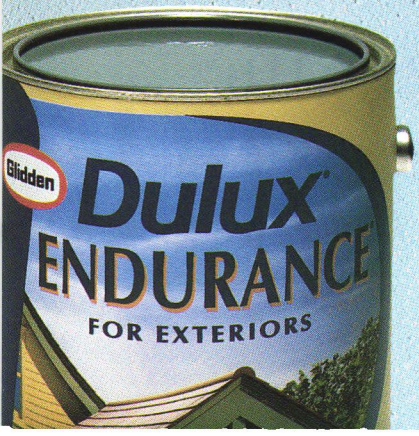
But it occurs to me that extravagant efficiency has come at the expense of emotional sustenance; the older gener tion of phones were not simply ab accomplices; they looked the par Consider the authority of the class black rotary table phone designed b Henry Dreyfuss in 1949. Its desig clearly suggested that if news of th world was to come, it should arriv through a solid and reliable conveyanc such as this. Or the sensuality of th creamy pink Princess phone introduce by AT&T in 1959, with all its assump tions about femininity. For sheer e pressiveness, though, these versions pa beside a phone I once bought in th form of a shiny red high-heeled shoe. gave it to a friend who believed in th transformative power of red shoes. Th was not footwear for a trip down the i formation highway; this phone was a implement of courage and imaginatio The first call my friend made on it wa to break up with her boyfriend.

The cordless phone in my kitche today bears no resemblance to its e pressive predecessors. Its taupe, neutra squared-off form attests to an empt emotional life. Voit tells me that today communication technology "enable people to take control of communica tions; it lets you be in command," h says. I'm not convinced; I remain ce tain that despite all the appliances we f our homes and lives with, our conne tions remain elusive. And I recall thos years of being a teenager, listening fo the ring of that white wall phone, m accomplice, my witness to the epheme al relationship between words and tim Its silence suggested that communic tion observes its own cycles. I learne then that words come, they go, yo never quite know when, and I think o that time as the age of information.

"On the Couch," a column about the psychology everyday life, will appear regularly. **Akiko Busc** *is a contributing editor whose articles on architectu and design have appeared in* Metropolis a Architectural Record, *among other places.*



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This photgraph has been color-enhanced to represent colors available in Glidden Dulux exterior paints, not that the house depicted was actually painted with these products.



"Companies were forever selling me hope-in-a-bottle.

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Discover Renova. Lots of cosmetics give you promises. RENOVA gives you proof. It's the only prescription cream proven to diminish fine lines and wrinkles. Proven to fade brown spots. Proven, too, to give skin a smoother texture and a rosier glow, when used as part of a total skin care and sun avoidance program, and when skin care and sun avoidance alone aren't enough. **What Renova does.** RENOVA is a prescription cream containing tretinoin, a vitamin A derivative much like the one naturally occurring in your body. Unlike over-the-counter wrinkle treatments, RENOVA doesn't simply exfoliate the surface layer of your skin. At first, your skin may become smoother and softer. After 2 or 3 months, brown spots begin to fade and the fine lines around your eyes and mouth start to disappear.

'inally, a tube of TRUTH."



What it doesn't do. RENOVA doesn't completely eliminate wrinkles; it reduces them. Nor will it repair sun-damaged skin or reverse the aging process. While using RENOVA, you can expect to experience some redness, itching or flaking. Generally, it's manageable and well-tolerated. If you stop using RENOVA, improvements will gradually disappear. **What to know about Renova.** *RENOVA is a dermal irritant. The results of continued irritation for greater than 48 weeks aren't known. Some people treated with RENOVA for longer than 48 weeks have shown evidence of atypical skin changes. The significance of this is unknown. Safety and effectiveness of RENOVA in those over 50 or with moderately or heavily pigmented skin is not established.* **What to do now.** Most importantly, see your doctor. But to learn more about RENOVA, and to get your free RENOVA skin care guide, call 1 800-64-RENOVA.

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FOR TOPICAL USE ON THE FACE ONLY

Brief Summary

RENOVA (tretinoin emollient cream) 0.05% contains the active ingredient tretinoin (a retinoid) in an emollient cream base.

IMPORTANT NOTE — This information is a BRIEF SUMMARY of the complete prescribing information provided with the product and therefore should not be used as the basis for prescribing the product. This summary was prepared by deleting from the complete prescribing information certain text, tables, and references. The physician should be thoroughly familiar with the complete prescribing information before prescribing the product.

INDICATIONS AND USAGE:

RENOVA (tretinoin emollient cream) 0.05% is indicated as an adjunctive agent (see second bullet point below) for use in the mitigation (palliation) of fine wrinkles, mottled hyperpigmentation, and tactile roughness of facial skin in patients who do not achieve such palliation using comprehensive skin care and sun avoidance programs alone (see bullet point 3 for populations in which effectiveness has not been established). **RENOVA DOES NOT ELIMINATE WRINKLES, REPAIR SUN DAMAGED SKIN, REVERSE PHOTOAGING, or RESTORE A MORE YOUTHFUL or YOUNGER DERMAL HISTOLOGIC PATTERN.** Many patients achieve desired palliative effects on fine wrinkling, mottled hyperpigmentation, and tactile roughness of facial skin with the use of comprehensive skin care and sun avoidance programs including sunscreens, protective clothing, and emollient creams **NOT** containing tretinoin.

- RENOVA has demonstrated NO MITIGATING EFFECT on significant signs of chronic sun exposure such as coarse or deep wrinkling, skin yellowing, lentigines, telangiectasia, skin laxity, keratinocytic atypia, melanocytic atypia, or dermal elastosis.
- RENOVA should be used under medical supervision as an adjunct to a comprehensive skin care and sun avoidance program that includes the use of effective sunscreens (minimum SPF of 15) and protective clothing when desired results on fine wrinkles, mottled hyperpigmentation, and roughness of facial skin have not been achieved with a comprehensive skin care and sun avoidance program alone.
- The effectiveness of RENOVA in the mitigation of fine wrinkles, mottled hyperpigmentation, and tactile roughness of facial skin has not been established in people greater than 50 years of age OR in people with moderately to heavily pigmented skin. In addition, patients with visible actinic keratoses and patients with a history of skin cancer were excluded from clinical trials of RENOVA. Thus the effectiveness and safety of RENOVA in these populations are not known at this time. (See **WARNINGS** section.)
- Neither the safety nor the effectiveness of RENOVA for the prevention or treatment of actinic keratoses or skin neoplasms has been established.
- Neither the safety nor the efficacy of using RENOVA daily for greater than 48 weeks has been established, and daily use beyond 48 weeks has not been systematically and histologically investigated in adequate and well-controlled trials. (See **WARNINGS** section.)

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

This drug is contraindicated in individuals with a history of sensitivity reactions to any of its components. It should be discontinued if hypersensitivity to any of its ingredients is noted.

WARNINGS

- RENOVA is a dermal irritant, and the results of continued irritation of the skin for greater than 48 weeks are not known. There is evidence of atypical changes in melanocytes and keratinocytes, and of increased dermal elastosis in some patients treated with RENOVA for longer than 48 weeks. The significance of these findings is unknown.
- Safety and effectiveness of RENOVA in individuals with moderately or heavily pigmented skin have not been established.

- RENOVA should not be administered if the patient is also taking drugs known to be photosensitizers (e.g., thiazides, tetracyclines, fluoroquinolones, phenothiazines, sulfonamides) because of the possibility of augmented phototoxicity.
- Safety and effectiveness of RENOVA in individuals older than 50 years of age have not been established.

This product should only be used under medical supervision as part of a comprehensive skin care and sun avoidance program. (See **INDICATIONS AND USAGE** section.) It should only be applied before retiring at night. Because of heightened burning susceptibility, exposure to sunlight (including sunlamps) should be avoided or minimized during use of RENOVA. Patients must be warned to use sunscreens (minimum SPF of 15) and protective clothing when using RENOVA. Patients with sunburn should be advised not to use RENOVA until fully recovered. Patients who may have considerable sun exposure due to their occupation and those patients with inherent sensitivity to sunlight should exercise particular caution when using RENOVA and assure that the precautions outlined in the Information for Patients subsection are observed.

RENOVA should be kept out of the eyes, mouth, angles of the nose, and mucous membranes. Topical use may cause severe local erythema, pruritus, burning, stinging, and peeling at the site of application. If the degree of local irritation warrants, patients should be directed to use less medication, decrease the frequency of application, discontinue use temporarily, or discontinue use altogether.

Tretinoin has been reported to cause severe irritation on eczematous skin and should be used only with utmost caution in patients with this condition.

Application of larger amounts of medication than recommended will not lead to more rapid or better results, and marked redness, peeling, or discomfort may occur.

PRECAUTIONS:

General: RENOVA should only be used as an adjunct to a comprehensive skin care and sun avoidance program. (See **INDICATIONS AND USAGE** section.)

If a drug sensitivity, chemical irritation, or a systemic adverse reaction develops, use of RENOVA should be discontinued.

Weather extremes, such as wind or cold, may be more irritating to patients using RENOVA.

Information for Patients: A patient information leaflet has been prepared and is included with each package of RENOVA. In addition, patients should be instructed:

- That RENOVA is not a cosmetic preparation and should be applied only as an adjunct to a comprehensive skin care and sun avoidance program,
- Never to use more RENOVA than instructed and never use RENOVA more often than instructed as application of larger amounts of medication than recommended will not lead to more rapid or better results, and marked redness, peeling, or discomfort may occur,
- Only to apply RENOVA before retiring at night,
- To use a sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 15 during the day when being treated with RENOVA. Following discontinuation of RENOVA, continued avoidance of the sun and use of a sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 15 is recommended,
- To avoid direct sun exposure as much as possible whenever using RENOVA, and to avoid sunlamps totally while using RENOVA,
- NOT to use RENOVA if pregnant or attempting to become pregnant or at high risk of pregnancy,
- NOT to use RENOVA if sunburned or if the patient has eczema or other chronic skin condition(s),
- NOT to use RENOVA if inherently sensitive to sunlight,
- NOT to use RENOVA if also taking other drugs that increase sensitivity to sunlight,
- To use RENOVA with caution if also using other topical agents with a strong skin drying effect, produc high concentrations of alcohol, astringents, spices or lime, medicated soaps or shampoos, permanen solutions, electrolysis, hair depilatories or waxes, or other preparations or processes that might dry or the skin, unless otherwise instructed by their health care practitioner,
- To discontinue use of RENOVA and consult their health care provider if sensitivity or increased chemi tation occurs,
- That a majority of patients will lose most mitigating effects on fine wrinkles, mottled hyperpigmentatic tactile roughness of facial skin with discontinuation of a comprehensive skin care and sun avoidance pr including RENOVA; however, the safety and effectiveness of using RENOVA daily for greater than 48 have not been established,
- That most of the improvement noted with RENOVA is seen during the first 24 weeks of therapy. The therapy primarily maintained the improvement realized during the first 24 weeks.

Drug Interactions: Concomitant topical medications, medicated or abrasive soaps, shampoos, cleanser metics with a strong drying effect, products with high concentrations of alcohol, astringents, spices or lim manent wave solutions, electrolysis, hair depilatories or waxes, and products that may irritate the skin be used with caution in patients being treated with RENOVA because they may increase irritation with R VA.

RENOVA should not be administered if the patient is also taking drugs known to be photosensitizers (e. azides, tetracyclines, fluoroquinolones, phenothiazines, sulfonamides) because of the possibility of augr phototoxicity.

Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility: In a life-time dermal study in CD-1 mice, at 1(200 times the average recommended human topical clinical dose, a few skin tumors in the female mice ar tumors in male mice were observed. The biological significance of these findings is not clear becaus occurred at doses that exceeded the dermal maximally tolerated dose (MTD) of tretinoin and because the within the background natural occurrence rate for these tumors in this strain of mice. There was no evide carcinogenic potential when tretinoin was administered topically at a dose 5 times the average recomm human topical clinical dose. For purposes of comparisons of the animal exposure to human exposure, th ommended human topical clinical dose" is defined as 500 mg of 0.05% RENOVA applied daily to a 50 K son.

In a chronic, two-year bioassay of Vitamin A acid in mice performed by Tsubura and Yamamoto, gene amyloid deposition was reported in all groups in the basal layer of the Vitamin A treated skin. In CD-1 r similar study reported hyalinization at the treated skin sites and the incidence of this finding was 0/50, 3/5(and 2/50 in male mice and 1/50, 0/50, 4/50, and 2/50 in female mice from the vehicle control, 0.25 mg/l mg/kg, and 1 mg/kg groups, respectively.

Studies in hairless albino mice suggest that tretinoin may enhance the tumorigenic potential of carcin doses of UVB and UVA light from a solar simulator. In other studies, when lightly pigmented hairless mice ed with tretinoin were exposed to carcinogenic doses of UVB light, the incidence and rate of developn skin tumors were either reduced or no effect was seen. Due to significantly different experimental conditic strict comparison of these disparate data is possible at this time. Although the significance of these stu humans is not clear, patients should minimize exposure to sun.

The mutagenic potential of tretinoin was evaluated in the Ames assay and in the *in vivo* mouse micron assay, both of which were negative.

Dermal Segment I and III studies with RENOVA have not been performed in any species. In oral Segmen Segment III studies in rats with tretinoin, decreased survival of neonates and growth retardation were ob at doses in excess of 2 mg/kg/day (>400 times the average recommended human topical clinical dose)

Pregnancy:

Teratogenic effects: Pregnancy Category C.

ORAL tretinoin has been shown to be teratogenic in rats, mice, rabbits, hamsters, and subhuman prim was teratogenic and fetotoxic in rats when given orally in doses 1000 times the average recommended h topical clinical dose. However, variations in teratogenic doses among various strains of rats have been r ed. In the cynomolgus monkey, which, metabolically, is closer to humans for tretinoin than the other s examined, fetal malformations were reported at doses of 10 mg/kg/day or greater, but none were observe mg/kg/day (1000 times the average recommended human topical clinical dose), although increased s variations were observed at all doses. A dose-related increased embryolethality and abortion was rep Similar results have also been reported in pigtail macaques.

TOPICAL tretinoin in animal teratogenicity tests has generated equivocal results. There is evidence for t genicity (shortened or kinked tail) of topical tretinoin in Wistar rats at doses greater than 1 mg/kg/day (200 the recommended human topical clinical dose). Anomalies (humerus: short 13%, bent 6%, os parietal i pletely ossified 14%) have also been reported when 10 mg/kg/day was dermally applied.

There are other reports in New Zealand White rabbits with doses of approximately 80 times the recomm human topical clinical dose of an increased incidence of domed head and hydrocephaly, typical of re induced fetal malformations in this species.

In contrast, several well-controlled animal studies have shown that dermally applied tretinoin was not t genic at doses of 100 and 200 times the recommended human topical clinical dose, in rats and rabbits, re tively.

With widespread use of any drug, a small number of birth defect reports associated temporally with the a istration of the drug would be expected by chance alone. Thirty cases of temporally-associated congenit formations have been reported during two decades of clinical use of another formulation of topical tr (Retin-A). Although no definite pattern of teratogenicity and no causal association has been establishe these cases, 5 of the reports describe the rare birth defect category holoprosencephaly (defects associate incomplete midline development of the forebrain). The significance of these spontaneous reports in terms to the fetus is not known.

Non-teratogenic effects:

Dermal tretinoin has been shown to be fetotoxic in rabbits when administered in doses 100 times the r mended topical human clinical dose. Oral tretinoin has been shown to be fetotoxic in rats when administe doses 500 times the recommended topical human clinical dose.

There are, however, no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. RENOVA should not be during pregnancy.

Nursing Mothers: It is not known whether this drug is excreted in human milk. Because many drugs are e ed in human milk, caution should be exercised when RENOVA is administered to a nursing woman.

Pediatric Use: Safety and effectiveness in patients less than 18 years of age have not been established.

Geriatric Use: Safety and effectiveness in individuals older than 50 years of age have not been establishe

ADVERSE REACTIONS:

(See **BOXED WARNING, WARNINGS,** and **PRECAUTIONS** sections.)

In double-blind, vehicle-controlled studies involving 179 patients who applied RENOVA to their face, ac reactions associated with the use of RENOVA were limited primarily to the skin. During these trials, patients had to discontinue use of RENOVA because of adverse reactions. These discontinuations were skin irritation or related cutaneous adverse reactions.

Local reactions such as peeling, dry skin, burning, stinging, erythema, and pruritus were reported by alm subjects during therapy with RENOVA. These signs and symptoms were usually of mild to moderate se and generally occurred early in therapy. In most patients the dryness, peeling, and redness recurred after tial (24 week) decline.

OVERDOSAGE:

Application of larger amounts of medication than recommended will not lead to more rapid or better result marked redness, peeling, or discomfort may occur. Oral ingestion of the drug may lead to the same side e as those associated with excessive oral intake of Vitamin A.

Caution: Federal law prohibits dispensing without prescription.

DERMATOLOGICAL DIVISION
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Home Base

A Marriage of Taste

Geraldine and Kit Laybourne's Arts and Crafts apartment shows a genius for collaboration—and a serious sense of play

BY MOLLY PEACOCK



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHEL ARNAUD STYLED BY JUDYTH VAN AMRINGE

SHE FELL ASLEEP ON THE FLOOR of a dark back bedroom with a tangle of pipes up one wall—but woke up in a forest. The pipes had become the trunk of a tree that grew up the walls and into the sky; well, actually it was the ceiling that she and her husband had painted just before she'd curled up on the floor. They'd been working furiously on the river-view Manhattan apartment that they had sold everything, even their car, to buy. The two kids were with her mother, and they had just a week to get the place into move-in shape. Energized, her husband had stayed up, painting the room around her, so that when she woke, it was into the arms of a tree.

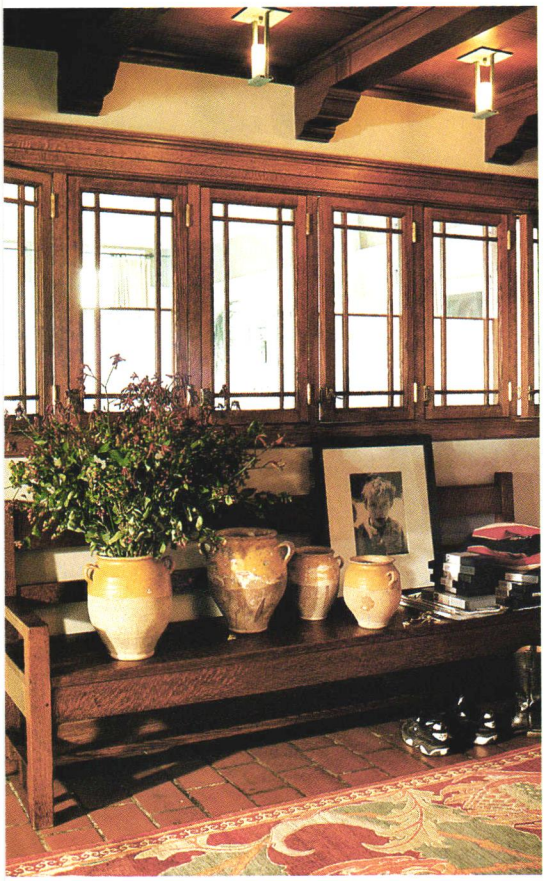
That tree-from-the-pipes grew two decades ago, before Geraldine Laybourne knew she would become a genius of children's television, first developing the successful Nickelodeon network and now applying her talents as president of Disney/ABC Cable Networks. The Manhattan apartment was an early artistic playground for Gerry and her husband, Kit, but a more recent, more sophisticated one is their house and "art barn" in Telluride, Colorado. Its fanciful master bedroom features a bed on wheels, which moves along a track, for sleeping under the stars. Kit Laybourne, a media pioneer and sculptor who recently joined the corporate world as a senior vice president at TELE-TV calls it a "Venus's-flytrap of a house," mean to lure all four family members, especially their two grow children, back into family life.

PARTNERS IN CREATIVITY Geraldine and Kit Laybourne in their Harperley Hall bedroom. The Gustav Stickley bench (circa 1902) still sports its original leather seat.

The couple's newly acquired apartment, on New York Central Park, has an even deeper, richer sense of play Harperley Hall, the 1910 Arts and Crafts building designed b


weather or not
LONDON FOG







COMFORT ZONES. The living room's leather sofas (from B&B Italia) atop a C. F. A. Voysey Donegal rug, and a Stickley table and chairs. The custom spread in the bedroom, left, adapts Arts and Crafts motifs. In the foyer, a Roycroft bench from an East Aurora, NY, chapel, and a carpet by Stark.

Henry Wilkinson, is a legacy of a previous generation's energy that, the Laybournes discovered, paralleled their own. Because they wanted their new place (which once belonged to Wilkinson himself) to retain its original character but also accommodate their personal taste, they chose to reinvigorate its spirit rather than restore it to the letter. This attitude stimulated powerful excitement among the design professionals who helped carry out this couple's dreams: architect John Petrarca, principal of the New York firm Architecture + Furniture; Greg Talmont, project architect; and Tim Gleason, of Tim Gleason Gallery, knowledgeable Arts and Crafts furniture dealer and restorer.

During our interview the Laybournes sit in a pleasant tangle on the copper-colored leather couches in the huge 40-foot-square living room. Kit and Gerry are finishing each other's sentences, not only in the predictable way



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of long-married couples but with a continuing sense of fun—even after twenty-six years. Creativity in living, psychologist D. W. Winnicott reminds us in *Playing and Reality,* requires a return to that dreamy spot where you're quite aware of the rules of the game *and* in tune with the whims of your own nature. As to the easy merging of the couple's visual instincts, Kit marvels, "It's amazingly unusual when your tastes line up. . . . . That doesn't even happen with siblings!"

"We've spent a lot of time in our life on houses," blonde, slender Gerry says softly, then brightens to tell a story. "Once, when our kids were little, we had to go pick out wallpaper, and the kids were misbehaving, so one of us had to stay outside in the car while the other one went in and looked. Kit went in first and came out and said, *'This is terrible! There's only one wallpaper in there that's going to work!'* Then I went in—and picked it out!"

The Laybournes met in Poughkeepsie, New York, during college. After they graduated, Gerry decided

GOOD BONES The sunny kitchen, right, with its fired clay English farmhouse sink, opens onto the dining room, below. The "Laybourne Table," inspired by the bones Kit uses in his sculpture, has a polished cast aluminum base. The chairs' design suggests the ribs of a ginkgo leaf.









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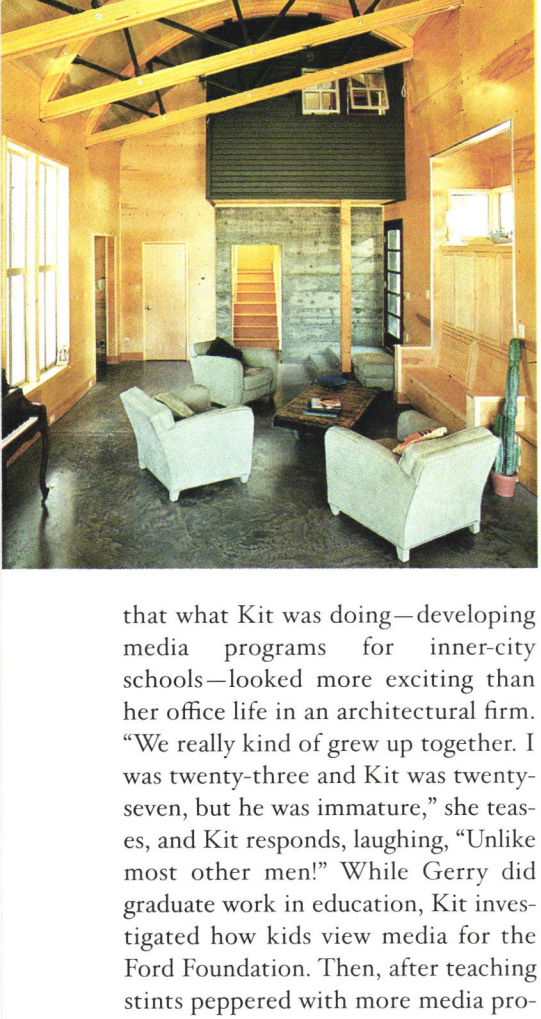




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CANYON CHIC
The Telluride Compound, right, a "Venus's flytrap" of a house, meant to lure the entire family, hugs the side of a canyon. In the living room, Donghia's Main Street club chairs, handpicked by Gerry and Kit. At the far end, the sleeping tower.

that what Kit was doing—developing media programs for inner-city schools—looked more exciting than her office life in an architectural firm. "We really kind of grew up together. I was twenty-three and Kit was twenty-seven, but he was immature," she teases, and Kit responds, laughing, "Unlike most other men!" While Gerry did graduate work in education, Kit investigated how kids view media for the Ford Foundation. Then, after teaching stints peppered with more media projects, the couple founded Early Bird Specials, marketing independent productions to TV. Gerry's career began in earnest when they sold two of their programs to Nickelodeon.

"Both in our work and in our home life," Gerry says, "we had a chance to play around when we had no money. Nickelodeon, in the good old days, had absolutely zero money, so all we had was our ingenuity." Their high spirit/low budget method led to Gerry's famous collaborative style at Nickelodeon. The Nick work areas, with smallish offices and lots of shared brainstorming space, are designed to bring executives out of hiding and into contact with one another. Gerry gave up her own twelve-windowed office to entice Nickelodeon people out of their sequestered quarters, thus teasing ideas from the shadows.

Philosopher Johan Huizinga thought we ought to rename *homo sapiens* (the thinking person) *homo ludens* (the playing person), and no doubt this baby-boom couple would agree. Not knowing an outcome is part of being *homo ludens*. The chances you must take, like Gerry's gamble on involving real children in the development of TV programming for kids, are payoffs in themselves. This means you have to get comfortable with being in process, and the Laybournes describe themselves as "being in construction or renovation" for nearly all of their marriage. After a decade in their river-view apartment, they moved across the Hudson to a large Victorian house and to a new enterprise, restoration. Their quest to adapt a historic house to their needs brought them into contact with artists who worked as craftspeople. Employing these artists to work through renovation problems prepared the Laybournes for the project of revitalizing their piece of Harperley Hall (actually two pieces: they also bought the small apartment next door).

When they acquired their apartment, they did not think of themselves as Arts and Crafts people and never fel wedded to a rigid historical concept However, they realized that the rever ence for hand fabrication that Willian Morris promoted in England during th late nineteenth century, and tha Gustav Stickley expounded in hi American magazine *The Craftsman* i the early twentieth century, was ver much a historical reflection of ideas th Laybournes had come to on their own "After years of eclectic taste's and roles just following our own way, we have nov come to a place in our lives where we ar actually delighted to be a little mor doctrinaire," Kit says. But when Ki Laybourne calls himself doctrinaire, i hardly means he's rigid. It means he' discovered the rules he wants to live by

If you rummage through the crampe closet of words to describe midlife keeping *mellow* and *centered* on thei hangers, you'll come to an old-fashione word more at home in the Arts an Crafts era: *civil*. We might say that con temporary civility of style is a person' own taste's having grown a character s deep that it respects the character o other defined ideas—and can live wit them side by side. Civility is an impor tant aspect of collaboration, and, o course, it is crucial in play. You can'

Unplug the phone. Mix plaids and stripes. Stop speaking to friends who begin every sentence with "I." Drink 6-8 glasses of water a day. When the oil light goes on in the car, add oil. Take deep breaths. Stay out of dark alleys. Listen when your boyfriend says he doesn't want a commitment. If it's collecting dust, throw it out. Stop feeling guilty. Don't surround yourself with off-white walls. Quit smoking. Don't lie to religious figures. Scratch the itch. Think of the thing you fear the most and do it. In the end, a spotless kitchen floor doesn't matter. Grow your own. Lower-watt light bulbs are more flattering. Move 3,000 miles away from your parents. Open a window. Smile when you say that. Kiss a baby. Go to church. Or a synagogue. Or a mosque. Or a mall. Play gin. Forgive somebody. Television isn't a role model. Laugh. And remember, sometimes all it takes is the right pillowcase. Live better.



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have fun, especially serious fun, if people don't take turns. When architect John Petrarca describes the original condition of the apartment, he fancifully compares it to "a worn suit with beautiful fabric and a cut you wouldn't find on a rack today. The lapels were wrong, and the stitching was coming out, and it didn't fit right, so we spent a lot of time retailoring it, trying to fit it back together, trying not to lose the original reason why it was attractive. Though some of our interventions were significant, you can't really tell what they were."

This is particularly true of the lighting in the living room. Wanting to add light while preserving the original fixtures, the architects constructed a picture rail, creating what Petrarca describes as "a long, subtle up light that causes the whole room to have almost a candlelit glow—though till we tried it, we really didn't know how it would come out." The ability to keep all the doors of possibility open has become architectural in the Laybournes' dressing room: the closets have no doors at all. You walk in and pick out your clothes, simple as that.

The Laybournes know what suits them in their bones and, literally, in the bones that surround them. On one of the walls in the octagonal dining room is a mounted skeleton of a fish that Gerry gave Kit for his birthday, and bone imagery is everywhere, especially in his sculptures. The centerpiece of the room is a glass-topped table with a cast aluminum base that suggests a piece of a giant vertebra. That dining-room table, now called the Laybourne Table because it won a 1995 industrial design award from *I.D. Magazine*, is a prime example of the collaborative principle of the firm Architecture + Furniture. "At first our interventions were an attempt to reinforce the period style," John Petrarca confirms, "whereas the table is a departure, an even purer form of Arts and Crafts. Kit started sending us big boxes of bones, and we fell in love with the sensuous aspects of them."

The chairs derived from a different organic source, but one linked with a traditional Arts and Crafts emblem, the ginkgo leaf. What look like animal rib bones in fact began as the ribs of a leaf. "Leaves have skeletons just like bodies," Petrarca reminds us. The relationship of Arts and Crafts leaf to Laybourne bone reflects the joining of personal preference with design theory.



THE OUTSIDE TRACK Mounted on steel wheels, the master bed (complete with snowplow) rolls out onto a deck for a view of the night sky. Sources, see back of book

"The Laybournes guide by not guiding," says Tim Gleason, designer of the leather chair seats. Gleason stained the seats dark, to make the rib cage/leaf rib of the chairbacks prominent. Gleason is also responsible for unearthing many of the Arts and Crafts pieces that anchor the apartment historically, such as the Charles Limbert–designed Morris chair, and the delicately placed Stickley server in the dining room, an unobtrusive piece complementing the built-in oak cabinets. The attempt to meld the natural and the human works to blend all the elements of the apartment, from the Roycroft chapel bench in the foyer to the huge, unifying C.F.A. Voysey rug in the living room with its blue and olive "Donnemara" design of flowers and leaves.

In a way, the Laybournes have woken up again in the middle of a forest o their own making, this time with fin craft inspiration and execution. The ex tensive oak woodwork, the warmth o the lighting, and the commitment t organic forms in the furnishings giv their apartment the warm austerity o structure revealed—structure of bon or of the limbs of a tree. Perhaps thes are the organically elegant forms o play itself. "The aesthetic of the Art and Crafts period is . . . our nativ voice," Kit says with a sense of discov ery, "and I'm glad we didn't find it be fore, because its values stand for wha we did." And for what they are. Outsid their windows lies the civil woodlan that Frederick Law Olmsted left fo New Yorkers to revel in, and in front o that window are two Stickley chair and a round Stickley table that seem t take in the Central Park view all b themselves—or perhaps the ghost o Henry Wilkinson is sitting there? Th Laybournes and their collaborator hope he's amused.

"Home Base" is a regular column on personal style

Molly Peacock *is the author of* Oringinal Love.



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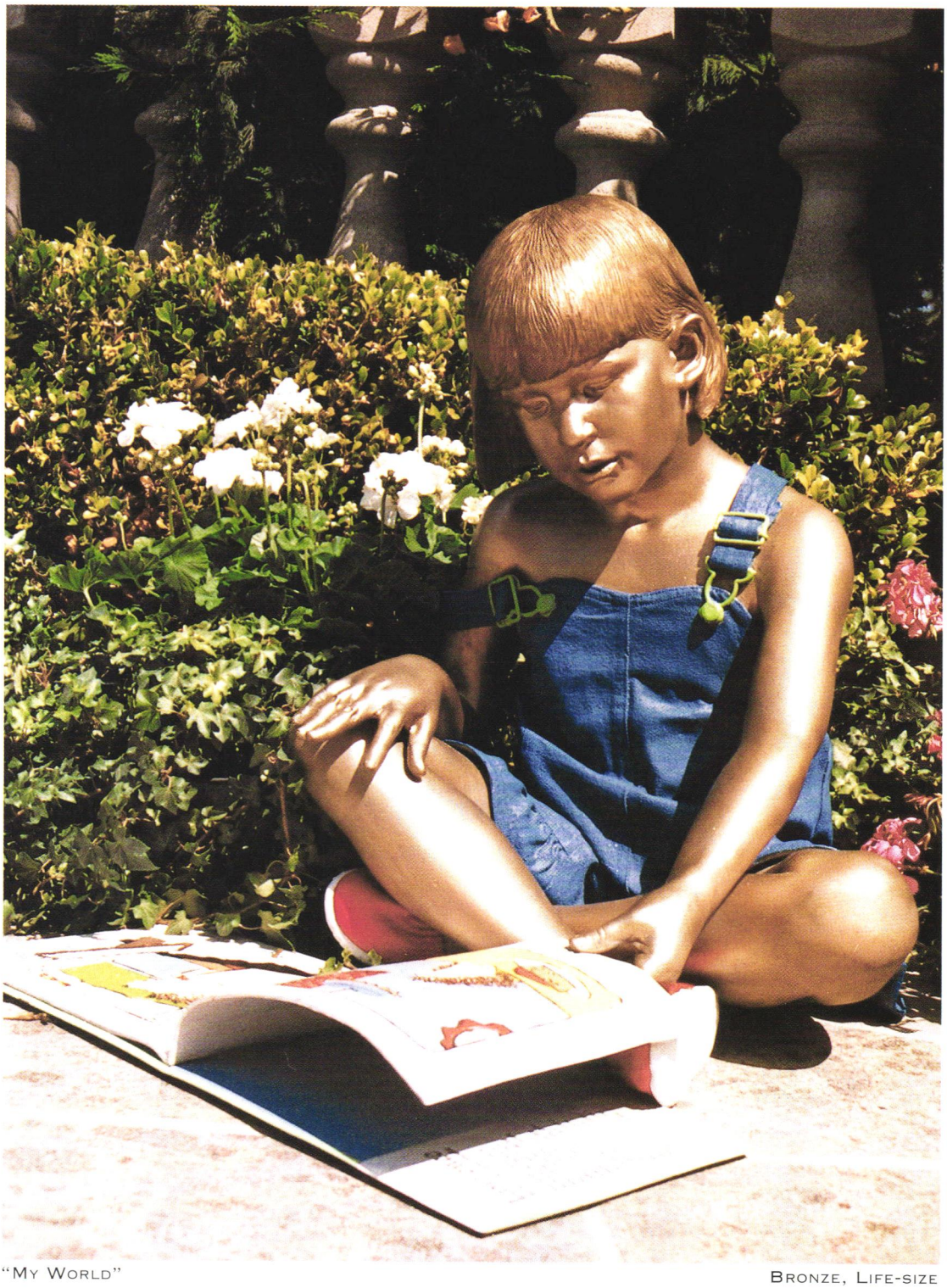
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Overused and overlooked, vintage desktop items are currently prized as models of industrial design

BY SUZANNE SLESIN



PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN CAPUCILLI

PIERCING Among the more desirable vintage staplers from the collection of Harry Greenberger, these examples range in price from $50 for the Hotchkiss No. 4 to $350 for the curly tailed Star.

EARLY NINETY YEARS AGO, Marcel Proust's hero bit ito that now famous madeleine and, in describing the mem- ries that sprang forth, forever changed our perception of the ay an object can invite us into unanticipated journeys.

About four years ago, Harry Greenberger of Riverdale, lew York, had a similar epiphany. But instead of the shell- haped biscuit, the public-school teacher's triggering device as an old-fashioned office stapler. The ordinary desktop accessory caught Greenberger's eye as he was picking his way through a flea market in Pennsylvania. "It brought all the memories back," says Greenberger, who was transported—in a Proustian fashion, of course—to the well-stocked shelves of his father's stationery store in Williston Park, Long Island.

The watershed stapler, a Neva-Clog by name, cost Greenberger a few dollars, and it prompted the teacher—who spends his spare time as an ad hoc antiques dealer—to search for other staplers. Soon, he had two more: a sleek 1940s Wilson Jones and a streamlined 1930s Hotchkiss. The man was hooked.

Greenberger now has hundreds of staplers, many of which are displayed cheek by jowl on 12-foot-long shelves in his hallway, along with dozens of what he calls "related devices": staple removers and the more mysterious paper fasteners—clamplike items that miraculously cut a hole in two pieces of paper, then slip the flap into the loop, rather the way students tear and bend the corners of their exercise sheets to hold them together.

The stapler, the tape dispenser, the staple remover, the rubber-stamp holder, the metal fan, the pencil sharpener have been, until recently, the Sleeping Beauties of the office environment. As telephones and typewriters evolved, their successive permutations were duly recorded. But that was not the fate of staplers and such.



"They evoke a world of clerks with gartered sleeves, of clattering typewriters, and operators with mellifluous voice



When styles changed, so did office accessories. Cast iron was replaced by aluminum, nickel-plated steel, and plastic. But who could have predicted that the early versions of these ordinary objects would one day be prized as vestiges capable of evoking a world of clerks with gartered sleeves and ink-stained fingers, of clattering typewriters, and mellifluous-voiced operators.

Many designs from the 1930s and '40s bore the marks of the new industrial design ethos: ingenuity and solidity. "They're a part of history and represent workmanship that doesn't exist anymore," Greenberger says, explaining why he has made vintage office supplies a specialty of his antiques business. "Sometimes they're even functional," he adds. "What more can you want?" But don't fall too hard for the late-nineteenth-century beauties, whose thick staples wind gracefully around the stapler's curled tail. Nowadays they can cost as much as $350 each. And don't expect them to work. Often the staples are missing. "The staples are the most valuable part," Greenberger explains. "They are impossible to find."

HELPMATES Clockwise from top: Bakelite Telechron clock; rubber-stamp holder; Bakelite magnifying glass; Bakelite adding machine; perpetual calendar; Kemper Thomas postal scale; Presto staple remover; Arrow staple remover; Bakelite digital clock; clipless fastener; Dexter paper fastener; stamp moistener; Hanson postal scale; 1930s intercom. Right: Fitzgerald electric fan. Sources, see back of book.

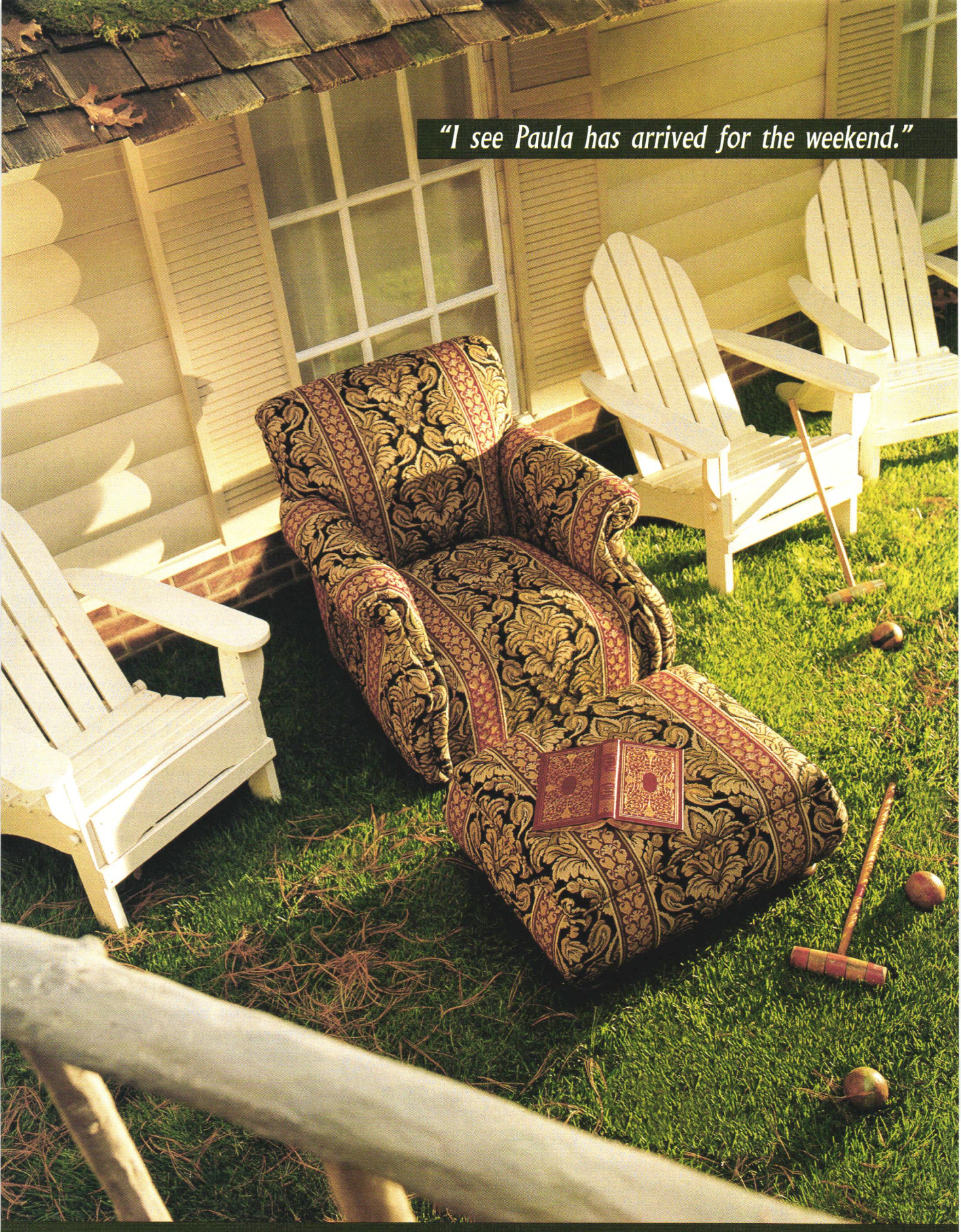
So are certain models.

Greenberger knows a collector who has been waiting and waiting for a 1940s Hotchkiss. "He'll pay anything for it," he says. Or at least around $350.

Greenberger knows of only one that more valuable: the Aristocrat b Hotchkiss, valued at $600 or more. was made in the 1940s with a met frame and a Bakelite cover. "It's divin and tiny," he says.

So what happened to all those desk top accessories that sat on every desk i every office, in every building, in ever small town or growing city? Along wit the whirring metal fans, the cast-iro goosenecked lamps, and the cerami stamp moisteners, the everyday item seem to have been discarded once the had been replaced by their more mod ern counterparts.

But they may not even have venture far from their original place of servic So, if you happen on an old roll-to desk at a garage sale, for example, pu out a drawer. A vintage stapler may b lurking inside. Don't ignore it. For few dollars (until word gets around) it a treasure waiting to be rediscovered and a connection to the history o American industrial design.



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Sketches

Household Gods, Passing Fancies

Albert Hadley's bulletin board is the shorthand to his style

BY JAMES REGINATO



WELLSPRING A segment of Hadley's pinups, including favorite projects, mentors, friends, and sources of joy and inspiration.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARIA ROBLEDO

NO NEED TO ASK Albert Hadley what's on his mind. Just look at his bulletin board. Like most designers, the venerable head of the firm of Parish-Hadley maintains a pinup wall that registers many of his current infatuations.

Hadley's wall may be in constant flux, but some items, especially portraits of his design mentors, stay up there forever. An urbane Van Day Truex, the longtime director of Parsons School of Design, strikes a pose sometime in the 1950s with a tubular lamp he'd just brought back from Milan. (In a bit of cousinage, the very same light now stands next to Hadley's desk.) "Van Day's contribution was enormous," Hadley says. "He had more influence than we perhaps realize. He had great, great taste. His students were very fortunate because, through his social connections, they were exposed to people with real style and taste. We got to see things most people never get to see. It was the real thing . . . history, civilized life, not just decoration."

Another icon is Bill Pahlmann, former design director of Lord & Taylor, who in his heyday hired Salvador Dalí to dress the store windows. "Up until that point," says Hadley, "decorating was a fairly ladylike procedure. The only person doing anything startling was maybe Dorothy Draper, with her big, oversized patterns. Pahlmann should be given credit for what we think of today as eclecticism. He brought into sharp focus for the public these combinations of things that hadn't been put together in quite that way."

Hadley's pantheon also includes the great ladies of his life. Washington, D.C., doyenne Oatsie Charles is seen in a characteristically jolly mood. "How can you not like Oatsie?" asks the decorator. "She has great style, taste, and she lives in one of the most charming houses in Washington. She has a terrific eye for furniture and objects. It's done but not done. It all has a really relaxed quality."

Just slightly to the right of Oatsie is a shot of New York society powerhouse Louise Grunwald. "She's darling," Hadley coos. "I love her. She has the greatest wit, sense of fun about her life. And she has such chic, a magical way of doing things. When she gives a party, she's the best hostess. In her houses the perfection is done with such ease, it's offhand in a way. It's so refreshing."

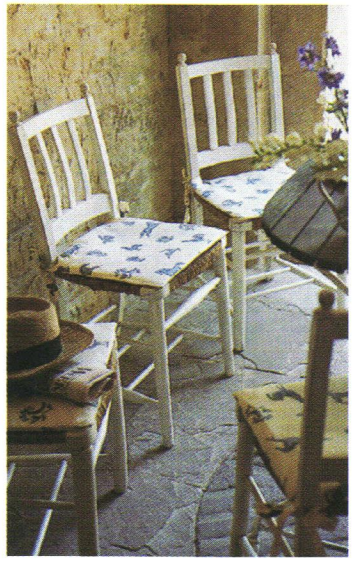
The board is also decorated with Hadley's charming renderings. Some depict past projects, others, jobs that will never see

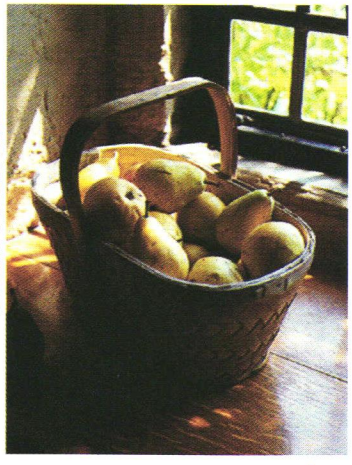
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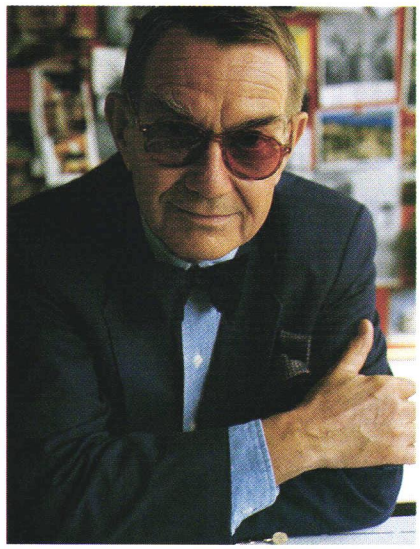
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LITMUS TEST Hadley, above, finds that his clients' reactions to the board give him useful clues to their tastes.

the light of day, such as a whimsical dining room. "It's a fantasy room. Just an idea I had one day." An elevator hall designed for the Radziwills' New York co-op is another nonstarter. "I don't think we ever did it. The neighbors didn't approve. . . . They don't all get made."

But a barrel-vaulted drawing room in Nashville did. "The idea was to do a garden room. We did the whole room in floral chintzes. It turned out to be pretty much like the sketch." It's obviously on the board because, like the restrained River House drawing room he did for Carter and Susan Burden in the sixties, it's one of his favorites.

"Sketches are shorthand," Hadley explains. "Things I do at the beginning of a job, a way of putting on paper for myself what I want to get across to the client. Quite often it happens."

Hadley's board also displays work by his protégés, such as a room designed by Robert Yoh, a talented young designer whose premature death greatly saddened the Parish-Hadley office. Yoh's apartment featured red-striped walls, leopard rugs, eighteenth-century chairs covered in purple silk, with shoelaces for gimp and old Brooks Brothers shirts covering the backs. "It's fun," smiles Hadley.

The sketches aren't all by Hadley, either. A series depicting some madly carved and colored chairs was done by a Parsons student, "a Russian boy who's working with us. He was inspired by Christian Lacroix. He showed them to me, and I said, 'Can I have them for my bulletin board?' They're sheer fantasy colorful, vibrant. . . . You never know, might have a pair made."

The board also includes a number o images that have simply caught the de signer's eye for one reason or another At the top one finds a page ripped out o *House & Garden* "a hundred years ago . . because it sort of says what decorating i all about: lovely fabrics, pretty chairs textiles, color, a mood kind of thing."

Of the inevitable postcards from friends, the most recent addition, tacked up just the other day, arrived from Sir Mortimer: a bedroom at Napoléon' Malmaison, an over-the-top extravaganza of crimson velvet and gold. "Sir has a red bedroom. She wrote on the card, 'I need more gold.' "

Jam-packed as it is, one would think



Albert Hadley's bulletin board is de signed to tell us what he's thinking. But in the end, it's really the other way around, according to the designer When clients walk into his office, they inevitably focus on different things. "It' interesting because without asking questions or making a point of it, you can learn a lot about people by the things they pick out, what they ask about. It helps me to know if they like something or don't like it. It gives me clues to them."

James Reginato, *editor-at-large of* House & Garden, *was formerly features editor of* W.



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Dealer's Choice

The King of Ming

In praise of the world's most beautiful chair

BY AMY PAGE



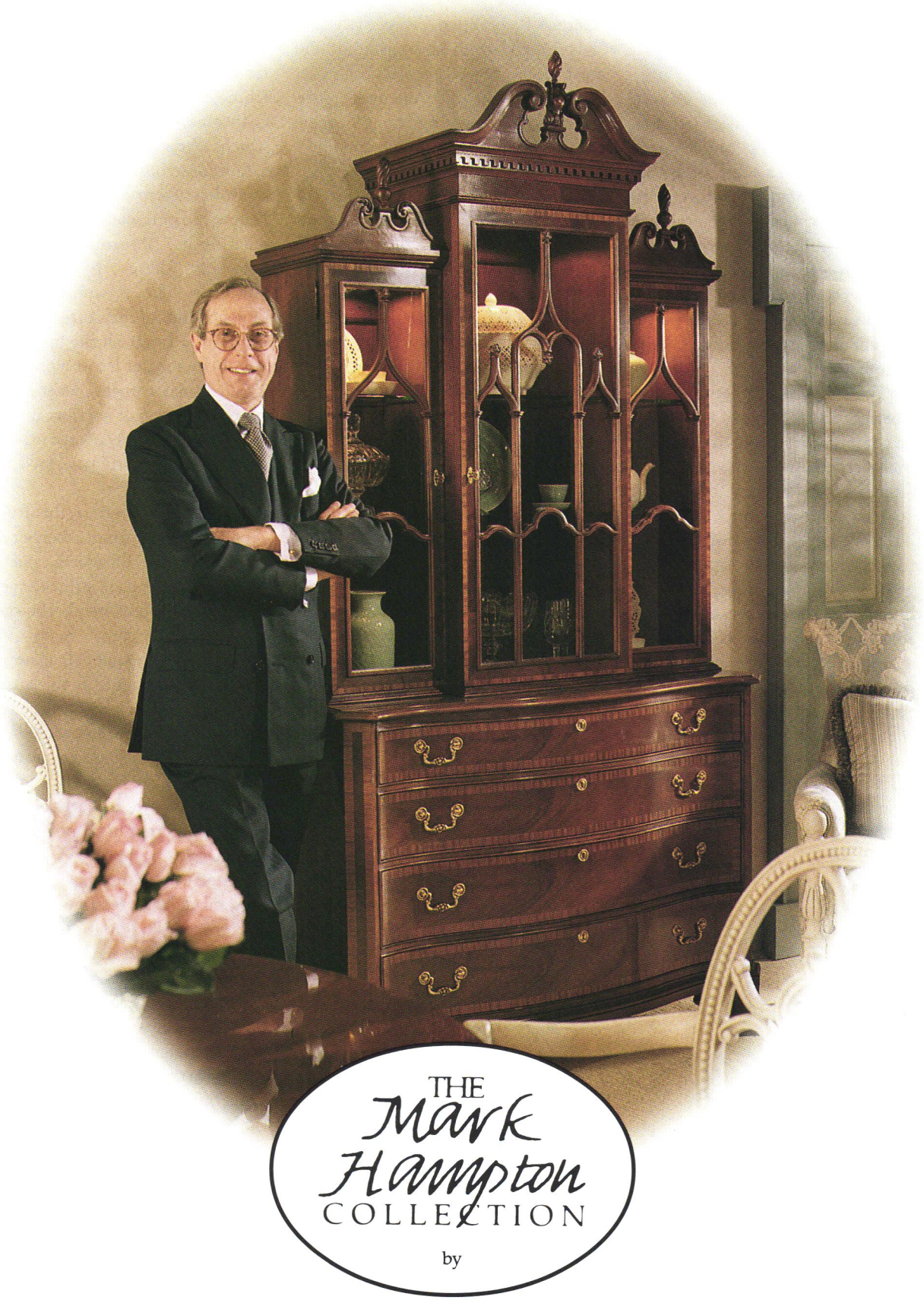
PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN HAGIWARA

"THE DAY WILL COME when a great Chinese sideboard will be worth as much as the John Nicholas Brown bureau bookcase, which fetched $11 million," predicts art dealer Robert H. Ellsworth, author of *Chinese Furniture*, the standard reference work on Ming and early Qing (Ch'ing) hardwood furniture. A charismatic man who boasts that he lives better than any of his clients, Ellsworth deals in early Chinese sculpture, bronzes, and ceramics. He no longer sells Chinese furniture, although he advises in the field. "I don't deal in any area of Chinese art where I collect," he says. "It's not fair to your clients if you collect what you also deal, because they're never going to get the best."

And the best is what he has. He describes his holdings in superlatives. He calls his Ming high yokeback chair, made of huanghuali wood in the second half of the sixteenth century, "the finest I have ever seen because of its balance and proportion. The 46 1/2 inch height of the back accounts for its stately appearance," he says, noting that most high yokeback chairs measure only 40 to 42 inches high. "The yokeback chair rail, which is indented so that one can rest one's neck on it, is properly placed and balanced with the S-shape of the splat [chairback], producing one of the most comfortable chairs in the world."

Ellsworth bought his first "great" piece of Chinese furniture on Madison Avenue for $125 in 1956, when he was twenty-seven years old. "It is the finest horseshoe armchair in the world," he says. "It took me three months to pay for it. I still own it."

What collectors such as Ellsworth seek so avidly are the best examples of Ming furniture. The high point of furniture making in China began during the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) and lasted into the early Qing dynasty (about 1644–1750) while the country was still prosperous and demand for luxury goods was high. Unlike later Chinese furniture, which is overly ornate, Ming-style is notable for its simplicity, beauty, elegance and proportion, as well as for its masterful construction. Made from exotic hardwoods imported from South Asia, primarily huanghuali but also zitan, hongmu, jichimu, and tielimu, the furniture's dovetail construction—based on the mortise-and-tenon system of joinery—allows most of the pieces to be dismantled and reassembled without



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the use of wood pins or glue.

Ming furniture design was slow to exert its influence in the West because, as Ellsworth points out, "the Western world never really saw anything that resembled true Ming furniture until the twentieth century." By now you can see Ming influence in several areas of twentieth-century design, most especially in Danish Modern furniture, which, Ellsworth thinks, is "almost totally influenced by Chinese severity and simplicity."

The first Western collectors were members of the expatriate and diplomatic communities living in Peking in the 1920s. The Chinese themselves are newcomers as collectors. "Except for the odd scholar in China, it wasn't until the West drew attention to it that there was any market for simple hardwood furniture at all in the Far East." Although there was substantial interest in Ming in the 1970s, there was almost no real market for it until the 1980s, when the furniture really started emerging from China. Today, however, the supply has all but dried up. "China's been raped," Ellsworth says. "Furniture was all aboveground, and most of it is now dispersed. You never know when you might uncover another great Han horse or Shang bronze, but you cannot open a tomb and find a great Ming bed."

Along with the surge of interest, rising prices, and a dwindling supply came the problem of what Ellsworth calls "married pieces, overly restored pieces, and out-and-out fakes." He believes that "most honest repairs disappeared after 1985." One can buy "a nice pair of horseshoe chairs with minor but honest replacements" for $15,000, or a pair of yokeback chairs "with a couple of bits off them" for $12,000 to $15,000. A great pair, however, "could easily be $150,000." He considers the most undervalued area of Chinese furniture to be "absolutely original, pristine pieces of softwood that show up quite regularly. You'd be better off with a real pair of elm chairs at $5,000 than you would with a doctored pair of huanghuali ones at $100,000."

Interest in Chinese furniture is now at an all-time high. As far as the market is concerned, the most eagerly anticipated event is Christie's September 19 sale of "Important Chinese Furniture," from the former Museum of Classical Chinese Furniture at Renaissance, California. This well-known collection, which, Christie's says, is now owned by a Taiwanese businessman, was formed by Robert Burton, the founder of the Fellowship of Friends, a nonprofit organization in California whose wealthy members follow the teachings of Gurdjieff. The organization started buying Chinese furniture in 1989, and went on to establish the museum, giving prices a major boost along the way. The first major single-owner collection ever to come up at auction, it contains some 107 lots. Many people expect it to set a new price structure for the high end of the market.

No piece of Chinese furniture has yet broken the $500,000 barrier at auction, although Ellsworth and other dealers say that such prices have been achieved privately. While the star lots at Christie's carry hefty presale estimates—a huanghuali canopy bed with lattice railings from the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century is expected to bring somewhere between $300,000 and $500,000—most are far more modestly valued, such as a late-seventeenth- or early-eighteenth-century hongmu brushpot (estimated to bring $1,000 to $1,500) or a pair of seventeenth-century huanghuali yokeback armchairs (estimated to bring $60,000 to $80,000 for the pair). In an effort to bring in new private buyers, Christie's has been emphasizing the wide price range as well as the enormous versatility of Chinese furniture in interior design.

Ellsworth thinks there are still real finds out there, but he cautions new buyers to spend time with someone who knows the field well. "If you're seriously interested and are willing to put in the time to look and study and watch all the sales, you can find things. A chair is to sit on, it isn't to be hung over the mantelpiece with a signature that says you could afford three million dollars to cover up a piece of wall."



"Dealer's Choice" *is a regular column about experts and expertise.* **Amy Page** *is the former editor of* Art & Auction.

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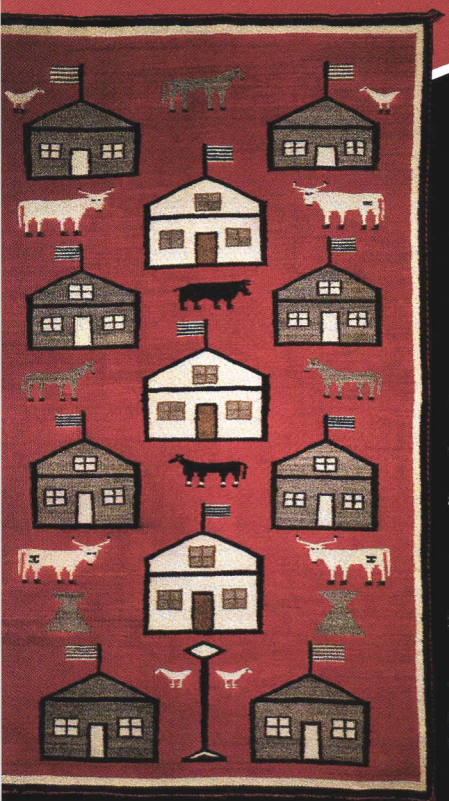
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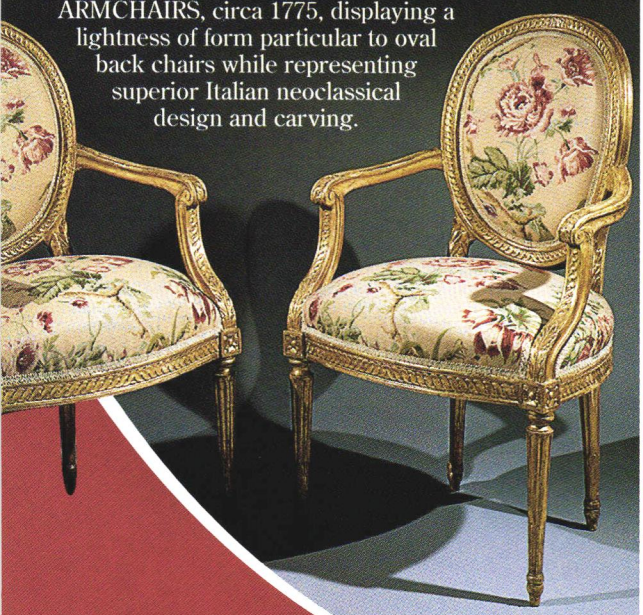
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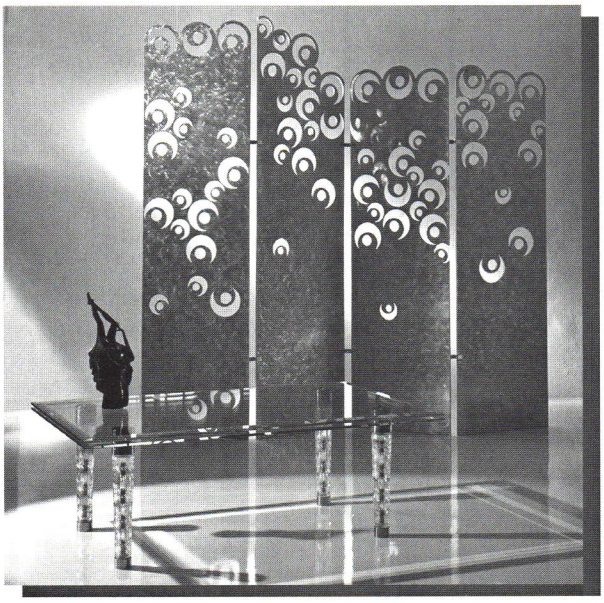






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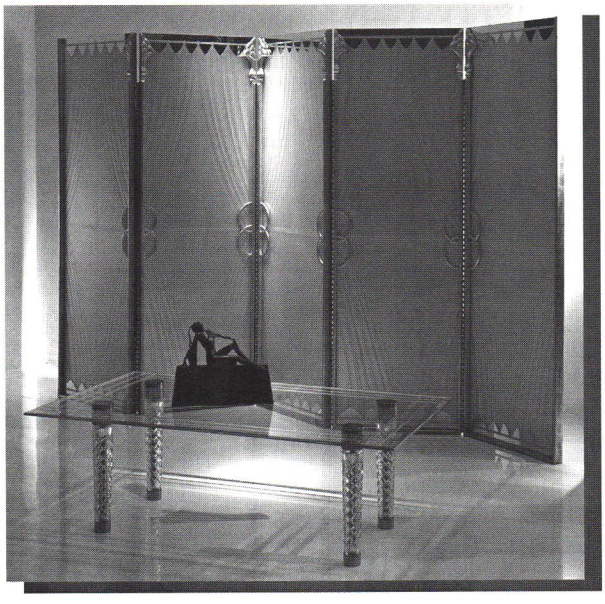
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Object Lesson

The Crystal Chandelier



A LOT MORE APPROACHABLE THAN ITS HAUGHTY REPUTATION WOULD SUGGEST, IT HAS A CHECKERED PAST AND A LIBERATED FUTURE

WRITTEN BY VÉRONIQUE VIENNE PRODUCED BY RORY GEVIS PHOTOGRAPHED BY CARLTON DAVIS

Object Lesson

History Suspended

CRYSTAL CHANDELIERS PROTECT their air rights with fierce bravado. Staking their claim over empty space, they put on an aggressive display of fire and ice: battalions of candles aim at the ceiling while cohorts of heavy glass icicles point to the floor. Despite their swagger, these fixtures are, for the most part, surprisingly inefficient at illumination. To understand them properly, think of them as light catchers, not light givers.

In the past, crystal chandeliers were frequently hung next to large windows, where a sunrise or a sunset would set them ablaze, and where winter light could turn them into scintillating tiaras. Often, a pair of mirrors was strategically positioned to reflect the fixture's twinkling likenesses into the darkest recesses of parlors and ballrooms.

Contemporary designers and decorators are on to the chandelier's strengths —and weaknesses. New York lighting designer Jerry Van Deelen explains that "the light refracted back into the chandelier creates a romantic mood, but it doesn't illuminate a room. You can't have it both ways. Don't expect to read a book by the light of your chandelier." To capitalize on the reflective properties of glass and crystal, designers are illuminating fixtures from the outside, pointing spotlights or track lighting at them. New York artist R. W. Russell creates mesmerizing crystal-and-ste sculptures whimsically adorned wi candles and then turns them into gl tering chandeliers by directing halog pin lights at their cores.

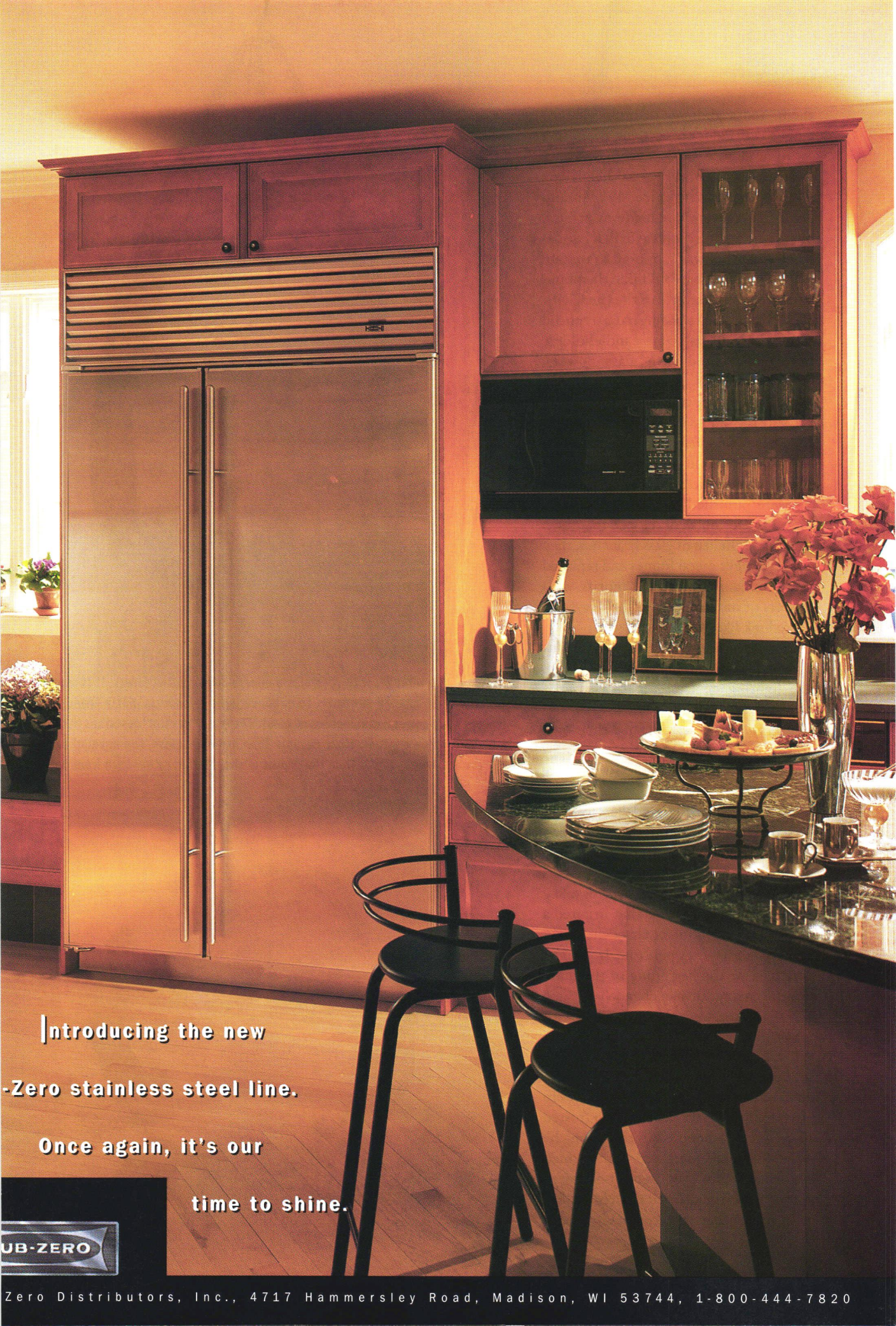
Although conventionally used at t center of a large room, crystal chanc liers often do their best work in sm spaces and on the periphery. Inciden light patterns, usually lost in the tra tional placement, become visible wh reflected on nearby surfaces. "A crys chandelier hanging in a corner, in alcove, or just a couple of feet abo a table will create intricate shado whether it is lit or not," says V Deelen. "The fixture will flicker wh capturing the reflection of some remc light source." He suggests placing c ored bulbs on top of bookcases or b hind sofas. "The chandelier will fi

BRUCE EICHER'S #361, Carnival with Beads previous page. This page from left: Gilt bronze Louis XV-style chandelier with roc crystal trim; crystal-and-iron Empire char delier; Nine-Light Crinoline crystal-and- bronze Doré chandelier.



The Pendant, the Necklace, the Icicle

MADE IN FRANCE, early crystal chandeliers featured natural quartz pendants hung from metal frames, left. Later, English glassmakers created elaborate leaded-crystal structures by stringing sparkling glass necklaces around the chandelier's arms, middle. In the 19th century, swags of crystal icicles turned Russian chandeliers into dazzling crowns. With the advent of electricity, when candles could be replaced by nearly invisible lightbulbs, the candleholder became a glorious lampshade, right.


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them, and a glimmer of pink, blue, or amber will suddenly cast the room in a soothing glow."

Seventeenth-century glass chandeliers manufactured in Venice by Murano glassblowers were not made of crystal, but of cristallo, a clear, brittle, soda-based glass that was supposed to imitate natural rock crystal. Built like the popular Dutch brass fixtures of the time, with curved branches radiating from a central stem, these translucent candleholders were ornamented with glass flowers, leaves, palmettos, streamers, and loops to maximize light refraction.

Exported all over Europe, Venetian chandeliers were famously fragile. French craftsmen, unable to repair or make cristallo chandeliers (Murano glassblowers were punished by death if they divulged the formula), developed their own alternative. In lieu of glass branches, they used curvy gilt metal frames and replaced the Venetians' decorative motifs with clusters of natural quartz (rock crystal), cut to look like gemstones.

Compared with their Venetian counterparts, these chandeliers were less effective lighting devices: the bulk of the pendants were suspended below the candles, in the dark. Yet they had their own brilliance: like drops of water, their pear-shaped quartz prisms captured every stray speck of light in the room.

Soon, these French chandeliers were superseded by much grander glass fixtures. In the early eighteenth century, two English inventions, lead glass and glass cutting, were combined to produce dazzling diamond-cut glass prisms that inspired a whole new generation of chandelier makers throughout Europe, from Ireland to Bohemia. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Russian chandeliers came into their own, their tiers festooned with cobalt glass and swags of sparkling icicles.

During the Victorian era, the big fire-and-ice sculptures lost their idiosyncratic reflective properties when they were fitted for gas and decked out with frosted white globes. Anchored to the ceiling by pipes, the chandeliers were transformed into efficacious, no-nonsense lampshades. Electricity freed the chandelier from its cumbersome *(continued on page 224)*

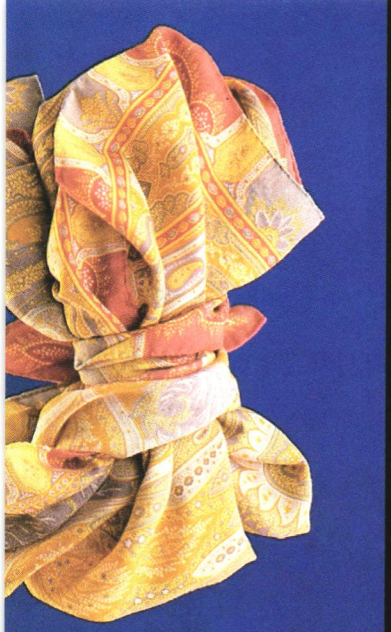


Rock Crystal

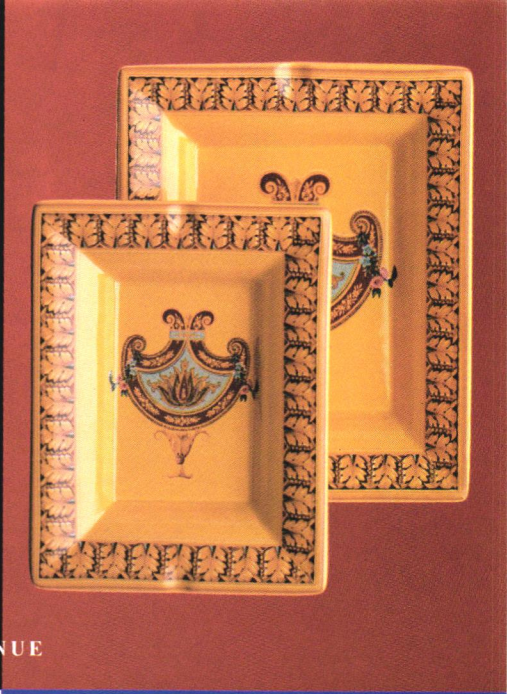
ALSO CALLED QUARTZ, rock crystal is a mineral with natural facets. It is frequently cut into pear-shaped pendants to enhance light refraction. Early French chandelier makers used rock crystal instead of glass. The word "crystal" describes glass with a high lead-oxide content. More durable than ordinary glass, the unusual brilliance of cut crystal, below, comes from the depths of the interior, rather than from the surface.

Cut Crystal

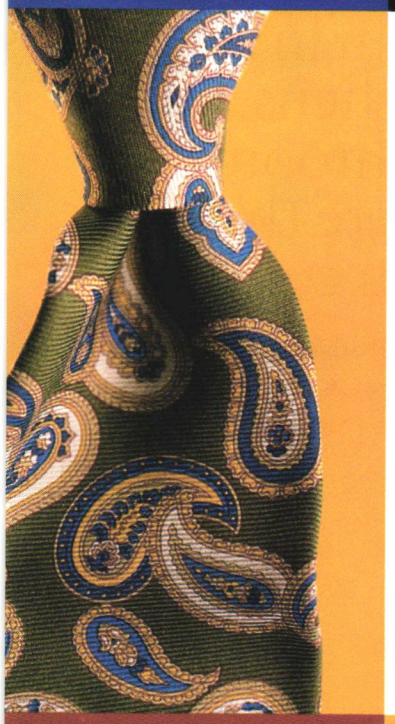


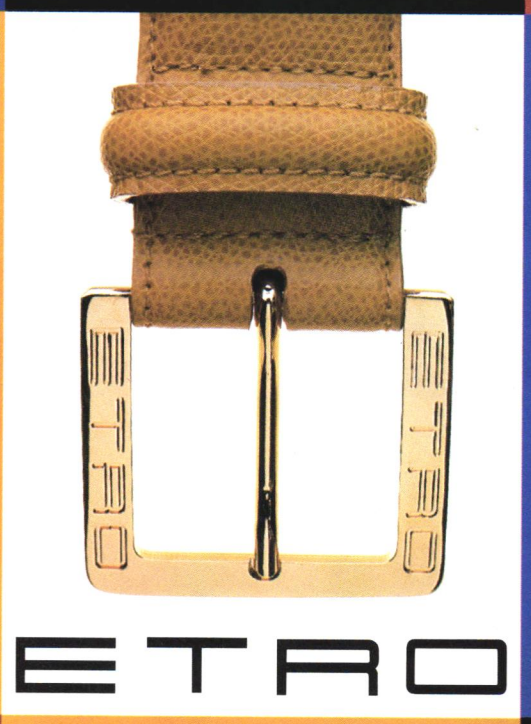


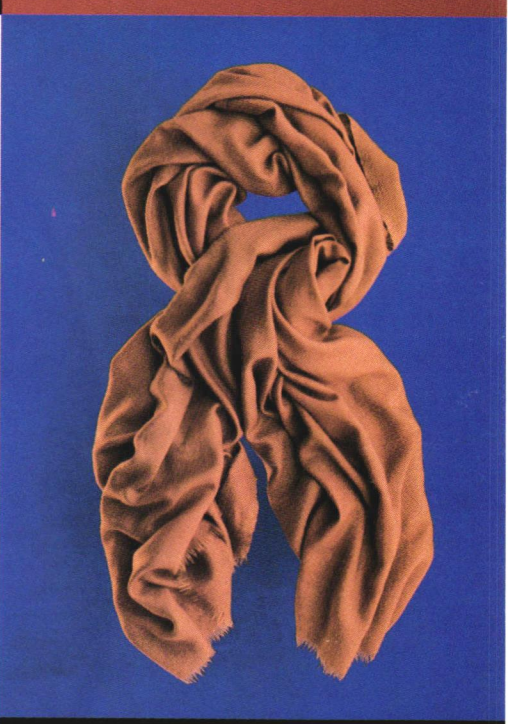




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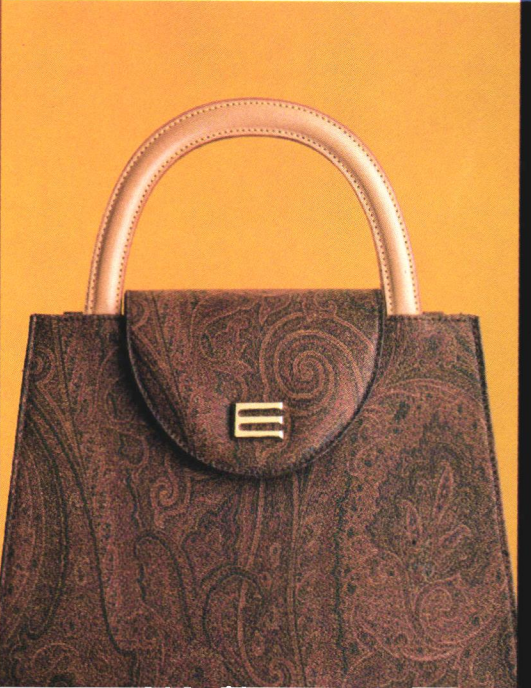






ETRO









"The beauty of crystal chandeliers is that they can be enjoyed on an everyday basis. No one has time to be formal anymore. I use them in bedrooms, kitchens, and bathrooms, where they are seen constantly"

Sheila Bridges, *Decorator*
NEW YORK CITY

Glass

GLASS RANGES in quality from the lighter and less expensive variety made from soda-lime silica to heavier and brighter lead-oxide crystal. According to chandelier expert Nancy Nesle, the better the glass, the less it attracts dust—making good chandeliers almost maintenance free.

BESET BY MOTHS, a crystal-and-steel Russian chandelier, opposite.





"A chandelier is a rare spectacle. To appreciate its beauty, I tell my clients to hang it lower, closer to them, where it becomes an intimate object. Try it at eye level over a table—you'll still be able to see your guests when you sit down—or just below a balcony, where you can gaze at it from above"

Bobby McAlpine, *Architect*, MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

THE COUNTRY CRYSTAL CHANDELIER with its crystal necklace, left; Five-Light antique chandelier with Silver Highlights, middle; Cobalt crystal chandelier.

plumbing, and by the 1920s the Art Deco fixtures designed by Ruhlmann and Lalique had become nothing more than sophisticated ceiling sconces.

Chandeliers are currently undergoing a process of democratization: people are bringing them down from their lofty perches, treating them like glass sculptures, and replacing bulbs with candles. Seattle-based Dale Chihuly, known for his unwired, handblown chandeliers, hangs them in corners, almost touching the floor, or over his lap pool, where they merge with their own reflections in the water. "Glass is so much like water," he says. "It acts th same way." His overscale creatio look like forbidden fruit from some e otic garden. "I don't know if technic ly they are chandeliers," he says, "but like the word."

"Object Lesson" *is a regular feature.* **Véroniq Vienne** *writes frequently about graphic design* Graphis, Emigre, *and* Metropolis.

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GIO PONTI multicolor chandelier with twelve arms; handblown Italian glass chandelier designed by Venini. All sources, page 228.



How large, how high, and how hot?

Although designers have begun taking an unbuttoned approach to the use of chandeliers, customers still want the conventional wisdom. Nesle (pronounced *Neslee*), one of New York's largest providers of crystal chandeliers, gives the following answers to frequently asked questions.

HOW LARGE SHOULD A CHANDELIER BE?

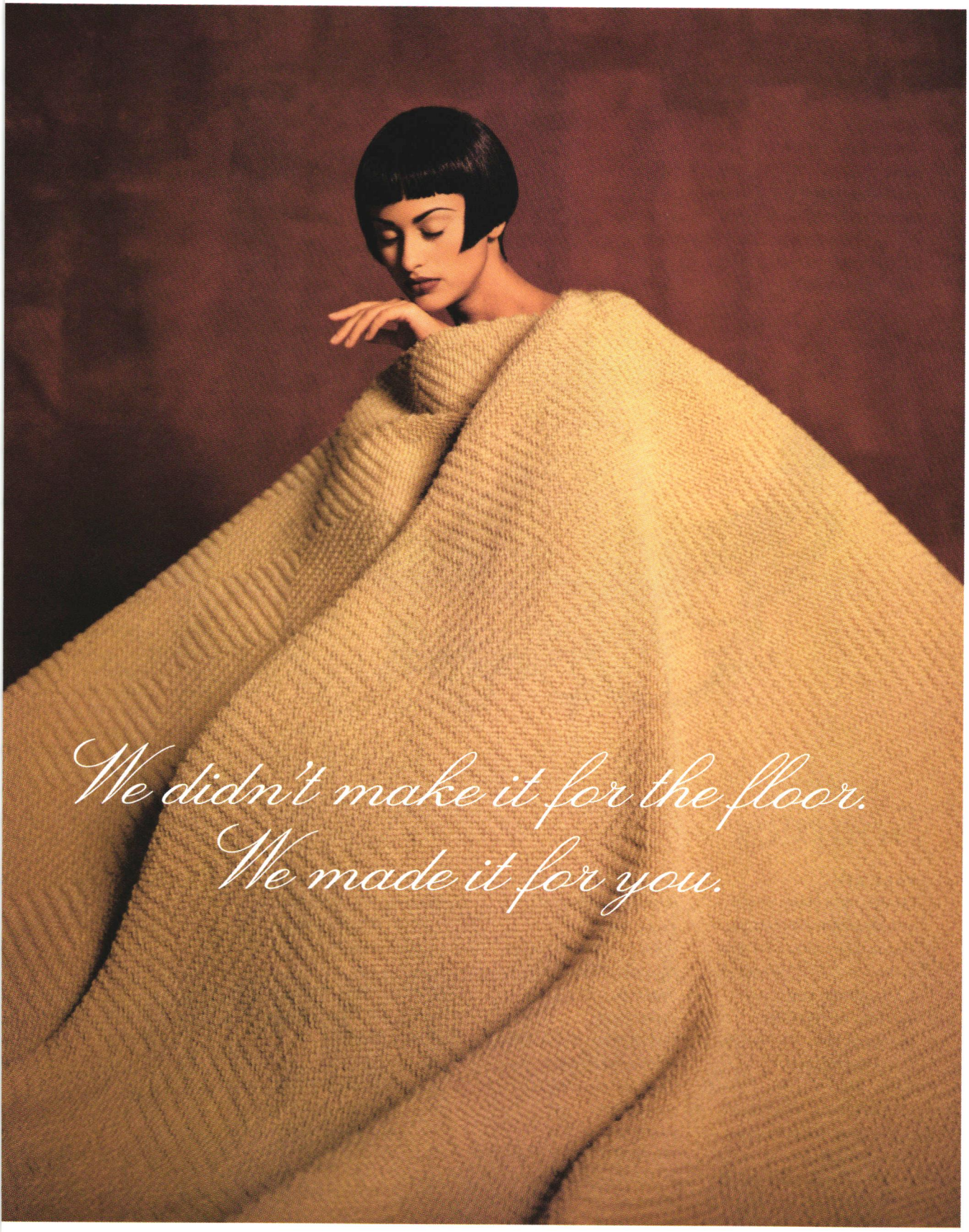
Measure the width of your room in feet. Take that figure and double it in inches to arrive at the approximate diameter for your chandelier. For example, a 15-foot-wide dining room will look best with a chandelier that is at least 30 inches in diameter.

HOW HIGH SHOULD THE FIXTURE BE HUNG?

In general, people hang chandeliers too high, making them look unapproachable and unconnected to the rest of the room. Unless your friends or family are membe of the NBA, allowing six and a half feet clearance from the floor should be plen If the fixture is suspended above a table bed, five and a half feet will do.

HOW ABOUT WIRING?

Don't ever use an old chandelier's origin wiring. Old wires are usually quite th and can become brittle enough to cause short. An electrician should check tl wiring every ten years or so.



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Object Lesson

FREE STYLE A wrought-iron Crate & Barrel chandelier makes the leap from plain to grand with help from artist Judyth van Amringe. Van Amringe strung glass beads on wires and wrapped them tightly around the middle of the fixture and on each of its branches. She then draped necklaces of beads over the whole chandelier and attached crystal drops from an older fixture to the bottom.



Sources

PAGE 217

CARNIVAL WITH BEADS, crystal with iron finish and silver gilt, $11,424, Bruce Eicher, Inc.,8755 Melrose Ave.,West Hollywood, CA 90069. For store information, 310-657-4630. From Matches at Miley, Washington, D.C., Design Center.

PAGE 218

LOUIS XV-STYLE CHANDELIER, gilt bronze frame and crystal trim, $22,000, Nesle, Inc., 151 E. 57th St., NY, NY 10022. 212-755-0515.

EMPIRE CHANDELIER, crystal and iron, $2,800, Julia Gray Ltd., 979 Third Ave., NY, NY 10022. 212-223-4454.

NINE-LIGHT CRINOLINE, crystal with bronze Doré finish, $24,760, Baccarat, Inc., 625 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10022. For store information, 800-363-4700.

PAGE 223

RUSSIAN CHANDELIER, $5,240, Niermann Weeks, PO Box 6671, Annapolis, MD 21403. 410-923-0123.

PRESERVED MOTHS, $25–$100, Maxilla and Mandible, 451-5 Columbus Ave., NY, NY 10024. 212-724-6173.

PAGE 224

THE COUNTRY CRYSTAL CHANDELIER, in crystal and brass with antique white and rust finish, $2,000, Jerrystyle, Inc., 51 E. 10th St., NY, NY 10003. 212-353-9480.

FIVE-LIGHT ANTIQUE CHANDELIER, with silver highlights, $819, Ethan Allen. 800-228-9229.

COBALT AND CRYSTAL CHANDELIER, bronze, $11,700, Christopher Norman, Inc., 41 W. 25th St., 10th Fl., NY, NY 10010. 212-647-0303.

PAGE 226

GIO PONTI MULTICOLOR, $14,250, 200 McKay Rd., Huntington Station, NY, NY 11746. 516-549-2745.

HANDBLOWN ITALIAN GLASS, late 1920s, $5,500, Alan Moss, 436 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10003. 212-473-1310.

PAGE 228

WROUGHT-IRON CHANDELIER, $329, Crate & Barrel, 725 Landwehr Rd., Northbrook, IL 60062. 800-451-8217.

BEADS, similar items at M&J Trimmings, 1008 6th Ave., NY, NY 10018. 212-391-9072.

D-Light!

THERE ARE MANY small-socl candelabra bulbs to choose from, each with its own persc ality, from plain torpedo-shap bulbs to flickering faux candl "I'm not a big fan of faking th flame," says decorator Sheila Bridges. "Save the curved-tip, colored, iridescent or prismat bulbs for the Christmas tree."

Nancy Nesle agrees. "Torpe bulbs are graceful enough. An stay away from the tiny ones that have less than 15 watts. C white or frosted 40- or even 60-watt bulbs—and put them on a dimmer."

Dawn Ladd, a Brooklyn, N York, lightsmith who restores chandeliers, makes the follow suggestions:

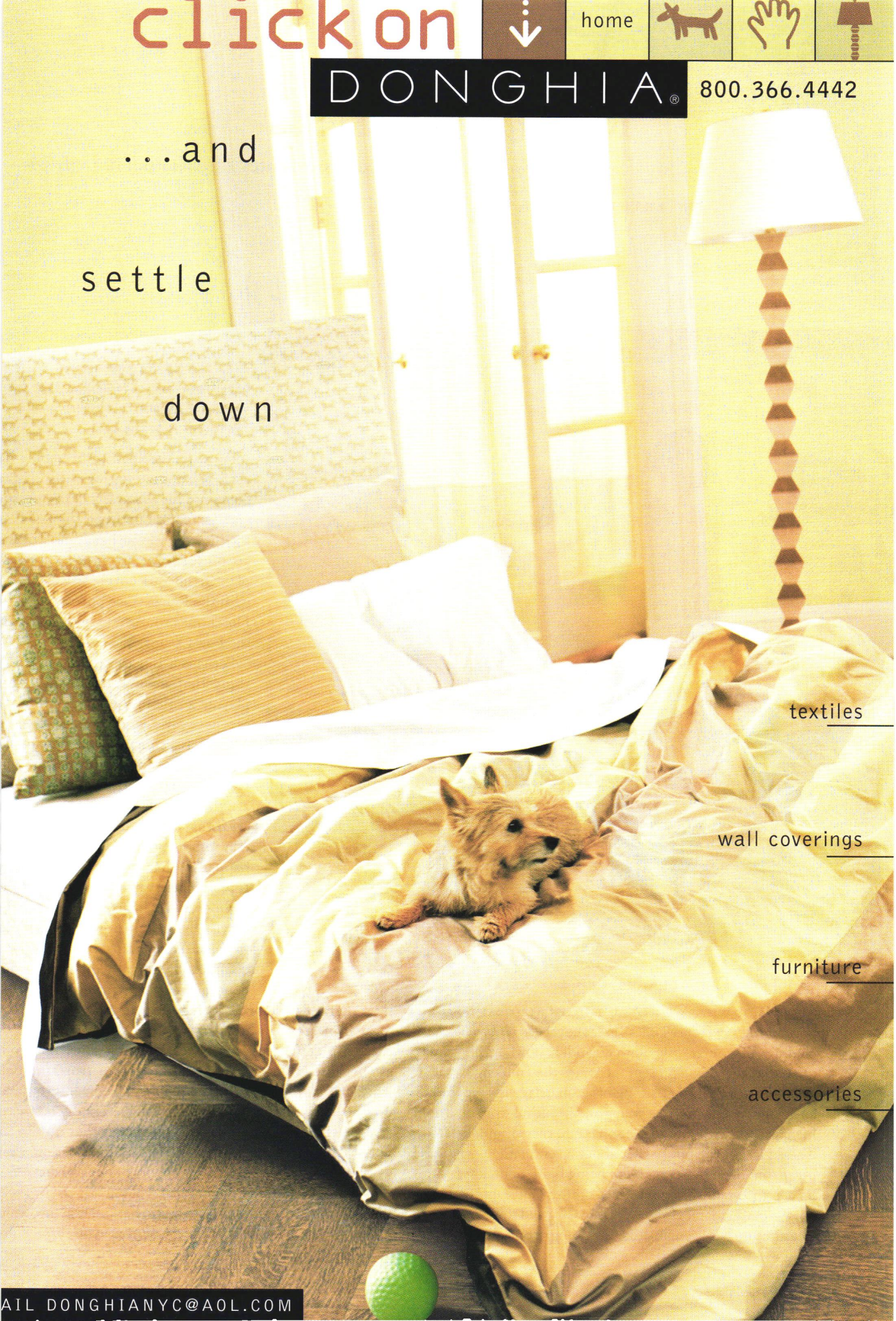
• Don't hesitate to mix 15-wa bulbs with those of 25, 40 or even 60 watts: an uneven dis bution of light will give your crystal chandeliers a more natural and vivid radiance.

• In the past, large chandelie with multiple rows of lights were installed on two or ever three circuits. Not all the lig were on all the time. Do the same thing with a smaller fixture—and put each circuit on a dimmer.

• In the 1920s, decorators used to paint clear bulbs with colorful designs, particularly stripes, because they create shadows and highlights. Glas paint will allow you to create the same effect.

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Art & Craft

Revelations in Clay

Betty Woodman's spirited vessels enter the sanctum of high art

BY ARTHUR C. DANTO



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARY ELLEN MARK

WILD SYMMETRY Woodman's balustrade shapes remind us that the vase is as central to Western art as the teapot is to the East.

OBJECTS OF WHAT WE WOULD TODAY CALL CRAFT play important roles in Henry James's great novel *The Golden Bowl*, including, of course, the flawed golden bowl itself, which, offered as a wedding present, becomes the emblem of one of the book's two marriages. The other marriage is proposed by an aging art collector to a young and beautiful woman, whom he has taken with him to see some rare tiles from Damascus. The action of the book is set about a century ago, when the great American museums were being built, and James's hero means to establish a great museum—a "museum of museums"—in what James calls American City, and to fill it with the treasures he has accumulated, including, ironically, his handsome wife, destined to become a de cent. What is interesting is that neith James nor his characters draws any sp cial distinction between the bowl an the tiles, on the one hand, and works art on the other. The tiles will have place in the Museum of Museums, alon with the Renaissance portraits and th Florentine bronzes and landscapes fro the Low Countries.

Perhaps it is because virtually ever thing that involves craft has cease playing a role in the making of art i recent years, and because beaut which was a common denominator b tween art and craft, has had decreasin relevance in the critical assessment art, that a distinction of rank has deve oped that assigns to the crafts a deci edly inferior status. How it should hav happened that works in which a cu ture's highest values should have bee embodied—Damascene tiles, golde bowls—have somehow been exclude from the high status of art requires complex historical explanation. Th good news is that transformations n less complex have been taking place in the art world th make it increasingly arbitrary to reject something as art b cause it is craft. This has opened space for something to b art because it is craft, and certain figures from the cra worlds of clay, wood, fiber, and glass have been producir work so exuberantly splendid that James's choosy aesthete transported into the present era, might say that if these a not art, they have no interest in art. By any criterion, the works are among the artistic splendors of our own era.

What is especially ingratiating about these works that they have not forsworn their association with use, whic had doubtless been a factor in the aesthetic disenfranchis





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"I know. Who's supposed to like their neighbors? But, really, you've been the best."

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"What?"

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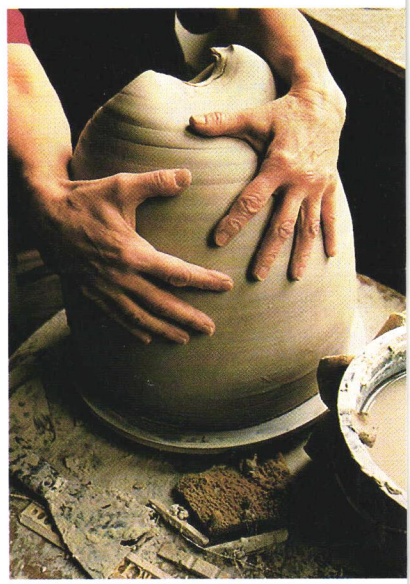
BEAUTIFUL USERS The design of the pitchers suggests their historical function and the shape of the women we imagine carried them. Right: Woodman at work.

ment of craft. The great meaning of craftwork comes precisely from the relationships it implies with human use, with eating and drinking, with sitting and sleeping—or with honoring through the presentation of cups and bowls, as in *The Golden Bowl*'s giving of ceremonial gifts. The great artist-craftspersons of our time have exploited and celebrated these profound meanings, so that their works, while admired as art, can in principle be used as vessels or furniture or covering, underscoring through their forms and in their materials the essential humanity these uses reveal.

Few craftspersons have been more successful in the crossover into art than ceramist Betty Woodman, whose central pieces improvise on the basic anatomy of the vase—neck, mouth, belly, lips, handles—which has enabled it down the millennia to be filled, lifted, and emptied in the crucial patterns of interaction with water carriers and libation bearers, milkmaids and barmaids, Electras and Rebeccas. The vase has come to be segregated in the modern interior as an ornament, primarily for the display of flowers, but its form is as old as settled human life, for it facilitated the transportation of water from well to household, or, made larger and fatter, the conveyance of oil and grain in the holds of ships and the storing and preserving of vital goods for lean seasons. And the rituals in which vaselike vessels figure are as extensive as culture itself. Think of the tremendous sight of mourning women in the *Oresteia*, pouring libations on the tomb of Agamemnon, symbolically washing away the spilled blood. Or the "jar with double handles" Achilles bestows on Nestor in the funeral games for Patroclus.

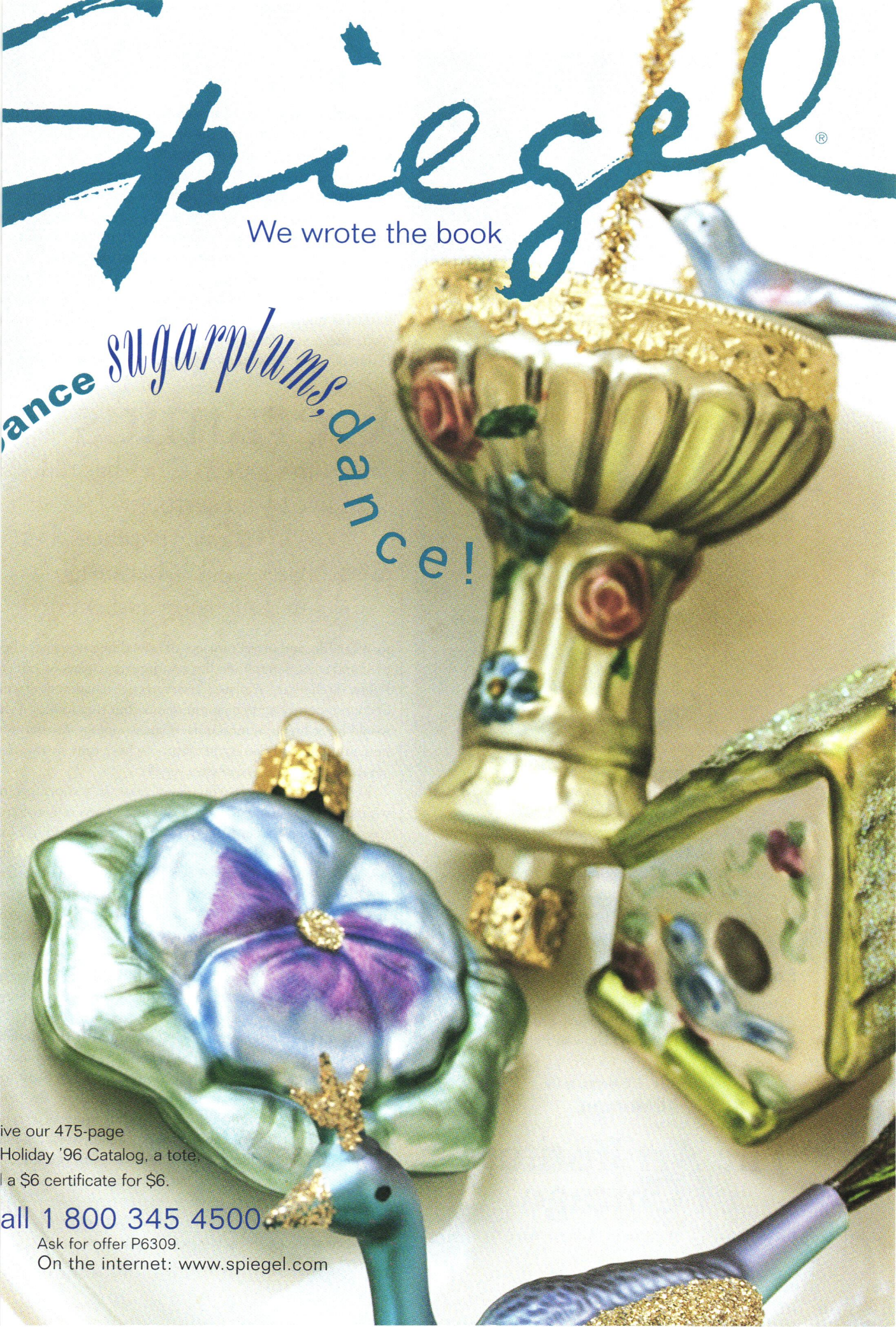
The vase's various forms are the memories of its momentous functions in human life at its most basic and most symbolic levels, and it would be difficult to imagine a subject more dense with meaning and more universal than it. The vase has nevertheless rarely been a subject for art, except marginally, in depictions of women at the well or as items in still lifes or in flower studies. Yet in Woodman's view, the vase defines Western art the way the teapot defines the East. And she has made the vase the star of her art, giving it glories of shape and surface, as if preparing pagan brides for colorful matrimonial rituals.

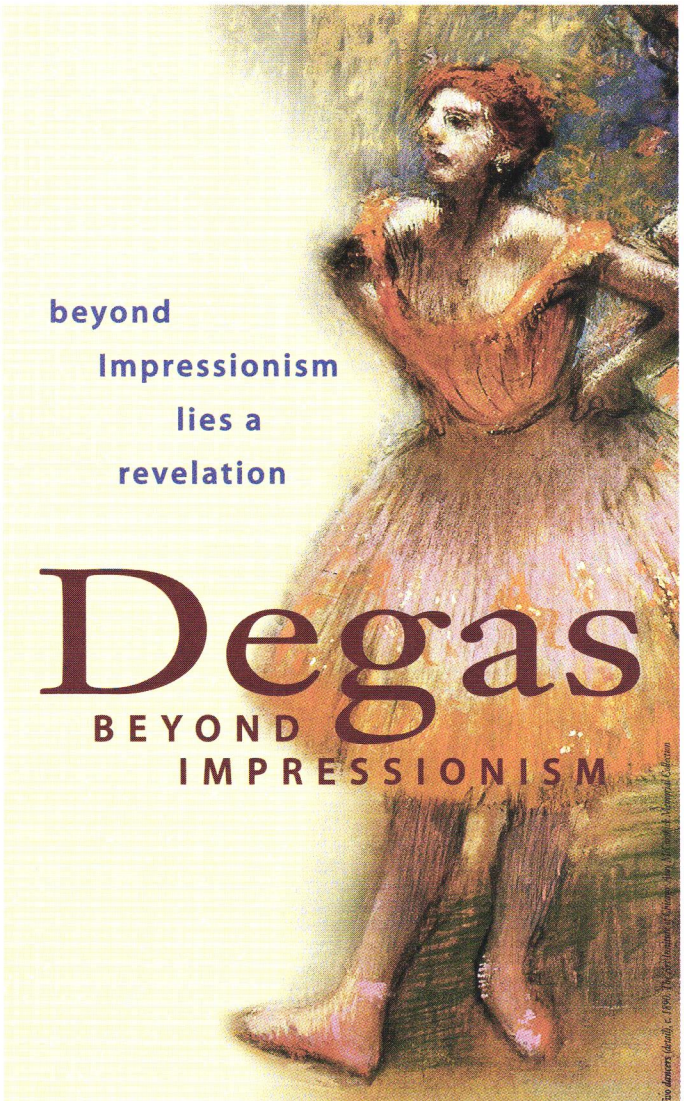
Ceramics in modern times has tended to live by an aesthetic of Zen spareness, but Woodman's work is barbaria in dimension and energy, and in its wil irregular patterning. A typical vase b her is made in three sections, with ex travagant handles like sleeved arm crooked back to rest, provocatively, o hips, or flung outward and upward, i the gesture of a dance. And it woul be a rare bouquet that rivaled in the ir tensity and variety of its hues an shapes the swags and petals, the dot and splotches, the brush stabs an sweeps, the endless array of juxtapose colors and patterns with which th vases holding it are covered. Wooc man's surfaces have a fauve opulenc that might support the description tha they are paintings on eccentric surface if it were not for the luminance an reflectance of the glazes, with whic paintings could scarcely compete, an the openings that remind us that thes are working vessels, sisters to th countless vases carried on the head



the shoulders, the hips of gracefu women down the centuries, wearin splashy skirts, blouses, and kerchiefs.

Betty Woodman's most famous ve sels are her so-called Pillow Pitchers, i which two vases are joined, mouth t mouth, so to speak, to form a plump la eral container, strapped together an made functional by a longish neck, a li and a handle. This, so far as I know, is form original with her, but it feels as if is a form rediscovered from some di tant ceramic culture. With their thicl dripped glazes and odd strength, th Pillow Pitchers evoke the heavy-foote


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Edgar Degas, *Two dancers* (detail), c. 1903, The Art Institute of Chicago, Joseph Winterbotham Collection

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ceramic horses of Tang China, and one imagines an hypothe for their shape—that whatever they contained (ferment mares' milk?) was poured into bowls by rolling the pitcher fo ward, the "straps" serving as rockers, and the shape itself transform of saddlebags, in memory of a nomadic form of li Their heaviness implies a strength in the original users th modern users no longer command, so that, like weapons v can barely lift, the tremendous pitchers stand as a critique modern effeteness. Of course these are resolutely modern—even postmodern—works, but there is something so agele so deeply human in the medium that Woodman has made h own, that even the most innovative of forms, the Pillo Pitchers being a case in point, awaken thoughts of primiti

Ceramics

in modern times has tended to live by an aesthetic of Zen spareness, but Woodman's work is barbarian in dimension and energy

forms of life, and project images of how things must have be used and what metaphors they continue to evoke. Woodma Pillow Pitchers are displayed in vitrines or on pedestals in win of contemporary art in major museums, but they look as if th would be at home in museums of anthropology, testimony human touch and fantasy in cultures whose only forms of a are their remarkably expressive vessels.

The author of these singular visions is a short inten woman, who wears overalls and the sort of severe hairdo o sees on women in Victorian photographs. She and her hu band, George Woodman, himself an artist, divide their tir between New York and Florence. She has a profound and a tive knowledge of the history of her chosen art, and her wor are filled with references to and celebrations of the gre ceramic traditions, whether in her own vessels, or in the ela orate architectural arrays she constructs as homages to t vase and the pitcher, or in the frescolike drawings she h been making in colored clays. She has recently completed balustrade in the new Denver International Airport, and exhibition of recent work is being mounted at the Stedeli Museum in Amsterdam from September 21 to November (she shows regularly at the Max Protetch gallery in New Yo City, where her prices range from $13,500 to $25,000 Woodman has achieved all this by breaking boundaries wh it has suited her, and has transformed the art world by ma ing objects of undeniable craft whose claim to the status art is irresistible.

"Art and Craft" *will appear regularly.* **Arthur C. Danto** *is the author* Beyond the Brillo Box, *among other books. He is the art critic of* The Natio



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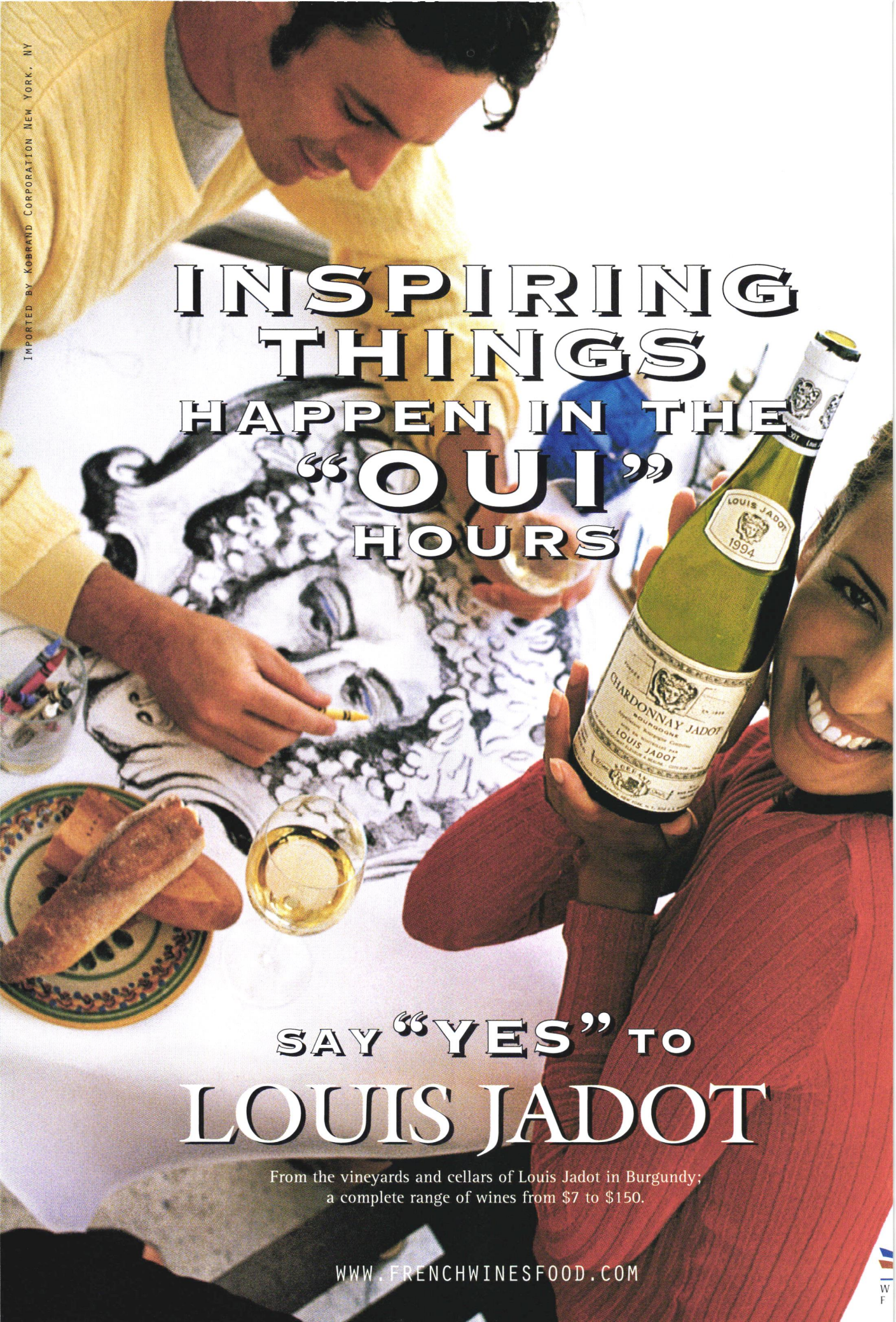
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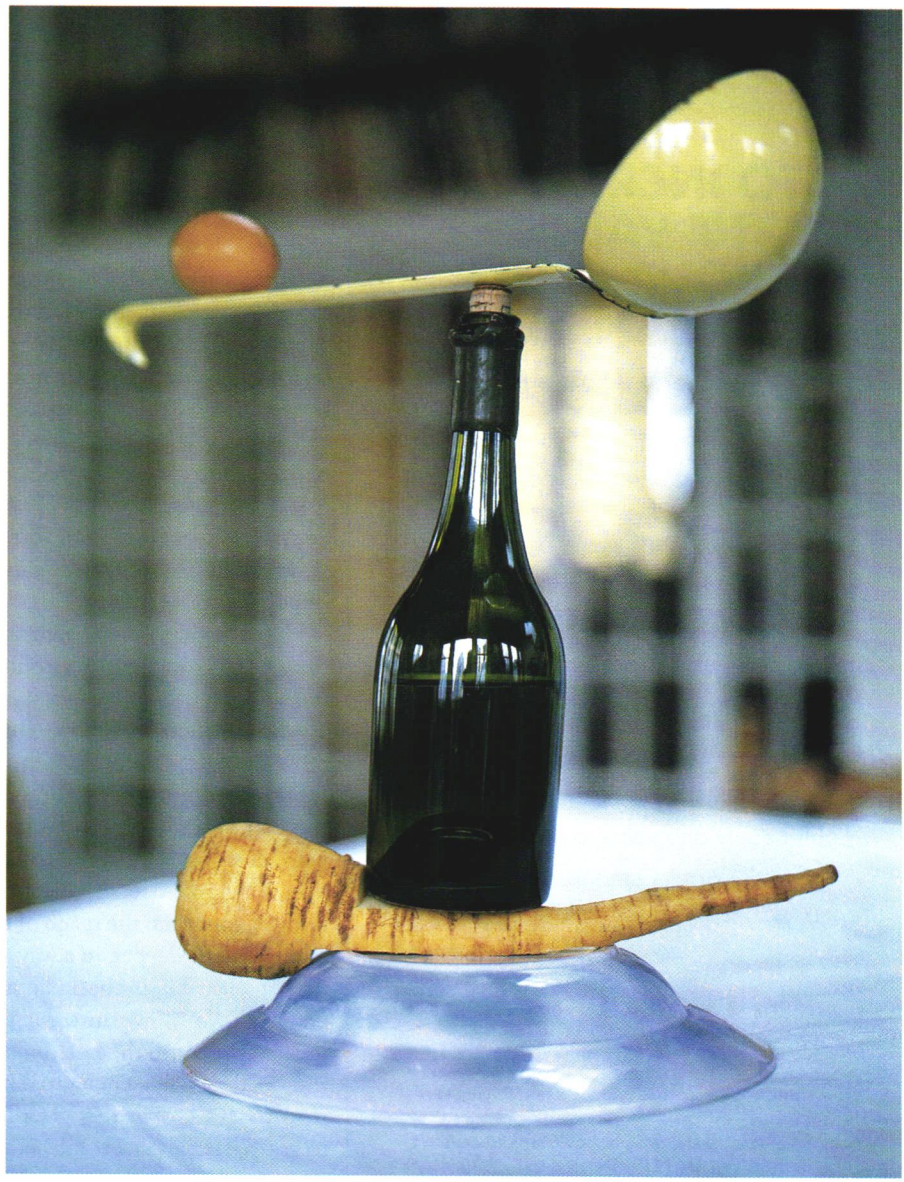

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Simple Things

The Portrait of a Ladle

A philosopher-cook gets the scoop on a kitchen utensil

BY CYNTHIA OZICK



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARIA ROBLEDO

CAME LATE TO THE LADLE. For years it y in a kitchen drawer, a practical cousin's ractical gift, for which I felt no gratitude. The uth is I have no affinity for pans and colan- ers and other culinary devices; my friendliest tensils have always been a trustworthy can pener screwed to the wall and a certain ncient red-handled wrench designed to twist ne covers off recalcitrant grocery jars. The dle, I believed, was a serious instrument for erious cooks, an accessory to the fact of real oups and real stews. I saw no use for it.

Yet the first time I dipped the ladle into a stew- den pot (a real stew, finally, but by then my hair ad turned white), I knew its value. The ladle, hough made of commonplace stainless steel, was ure gold. I had all along been feebly spooning ings out; but in the depth of a true stew a spoon an inept, lazy, shallow fellow, poor kin to a ladle. our spoon will bring up a pair of peas in a mild flat uddle—a spoon is nearly as feckless as a sieve. But our ladle is a powerful radar-equipped submarine urning into the wild deeps of an undertow, capa- e of trawling the seafloor, a driving authentic ves- l that will raise a rich authentic freight.

A spoon is an effete and timid little mouth, ood enough for teacups and sweet puddings. A dle is a great guzzling inebriate, given to gar- antuan drafts; a swiller of oceanic wassail; a iver into densest abysses.

It is no surprise, then, to look up to the sea of ars—the well of infinity that is the sky at ight—and find there two ladles, one Big, one ittle. The Big Dipper's seven stars are hitched o the nearby constellations of Draco and Leo; he hollow of its ladle has been transformed to a kind of Cinderella coach driven not by mice but by a ragon and a lion. The Little Dipper, by contrast, is the per- cted form of the purified, unmetaphoricized ladle; it is the ery incarnation of a Platonic notion of a ladle. (That the ncients should have seen it as Ursa Minor, a small bear, is no redit to them. But of course eyeglasses, never mind the tele- ope, hadn't yet been invented, so let it pass.)

As a reward for such precision of celestial engineering, a divine Hand long ago placed a diamond at the tip of the Little Dipper's handle. The diamond is called Polaris: the North Star, which connects the sky's seas with the earth's seas. For thousands of years before there were compasses, sailors fixed on Polaris to map the way from here to there, and back again. Without the ladle there would have been no



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navigation, no trade, no cross-culturalization. Without the ladle, how would Greece have learned geometry from Egypt? How would the alphabet have voyaged from the land of the Semites across the Mediterranean to Europe? How would Marco Polo have met the silkworm in China?

With its handle attached, the ladle is always activist: it will delve, scoop, dip, gouge, shovel, excavate. It will fetch up a mess of vegetables from the maw of a stewpot. Or an archaeological plinth; or a shard of what was itself once a Middle Bronze dipper.

Without its handle attached, the ladle can be laid-back, hammocklike, a cradle (the rhyme is, at least in the etymology of the psyche, plainly no accident): it can be the cavity of a crescent moon for Wynken, Blynken, and Nod to lie in. It can be civilized or primitive, enameled or rough, utilitarian or luxuriant. It can be tank, vat, barrel, keg, cask, or stoup; it can be urn or calabash shell, bowl or basin, silver chalice or Shaker firkin, Roman *simpulum* or Greek *kyathos*. It can be Ali Baba's jars to catch forty thieves in. It can be Tom Sawyer's scary cave. It can be the tunnel of love.

Hook the handle on again, and it can become the long haft of a fountain pen terminating in a well of black ink.

And just here we come (though for most of us the fountain pen has been superseded by the compact cavern of the computer, with its interior cybernetic cosmos)—we come to the ladle's deepest work: deeper than the ocean floor, deeper than the reach of the heavenly Dippers, deeper, in a way, than history itself. This is the ladle as it dips down, down, down into memory and imagination, into the bottomlessness of the word. It is the enchanted ladle that storytellers and writers grasp, or hope to grasp. Its handle (or hilt) is as long as the record of human habitation on our planet—or, some might wish to say, as long as thought and insight, as long as music and mathematics and science and art. And at the end of this longest handle of all is the dipper, the scoop, the vessel that raises up from the poet's or the philosopher's well something deeper, and higher, than we knew we knew.

Once upon a time there really us
to be an inkwell and a dipper; I rec
lect it myself. In my childhood eve
elementary-school desk had, in its upp
right corner, a round hole into whi
would fit a round glass cup. The ink mo
itor—generally a self-important fact
tum—filled the cup weekly, from a lar
glass bottle. Invariably the ink wou
spill and stain the wooden desk. V
pupils dipped our pens (metal nibs
wooden slots) and were drilled in "pe
manship," and dipped our pens aga
Every few words necessitated a fresh d
The inkwell was not deep—yet eve
year, as the grades ascended, it deepen
It deepened with *Travels with a Donkey*
deepened with "Ode to the West Win
it deepened with Ichabod Crane.

And the well of sensibility goes
deepening, the ladle goes on dippi
The ladle is, after all, the ultimate co
mic receptacle. It dips into knowled
and brings up wisdom. A month or
ago I heard a man my own age, a brillia
editor—of books, and also of a famo
magazine—scoop up out of his minc
lifetime's worth of ecstatic readi
novel after novel. His brain was mobb
with literature; the remembering dipp
fetched and fetched. What a pity, he sa
at last, that all this joyful mental stock
impermanent; ephemeral; it will go
waste; it will vanish when I vanish.

That same week I saw a newbo
infant (a grandchild, I confess), and m
veled at how perfectly it was formed
complete human simulacrum; but it h
no mental stock at all. It was a fresh
made ladle: a replenishing ladle rea
soon enough to dip into pictures a
melodies and rhymes. The well of stor
and ideas is eternal. But the ladle must
renewed. So decrees the Hand that p
the diamond on the Little Dipper's tai

My old kitchen ladle has a split in
handle—from age, not use. For thi
years I never took it out of its draw
Well, I've only recently learned how
cook a real stew, for which a stur
dipper—with no Polaris at its tip—
indispensable.

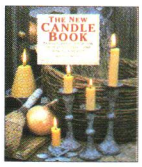
"These Simple Things," *a regular column, is an*
to a common household object. **Cynthia Ozick**
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The Country Look You Love

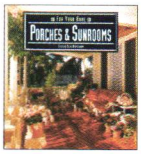
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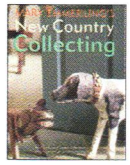
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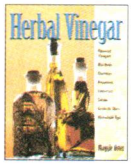
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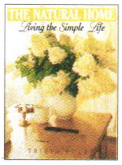
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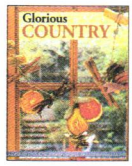


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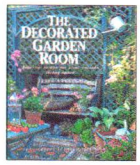


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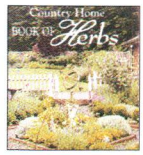




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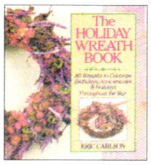
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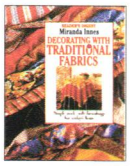
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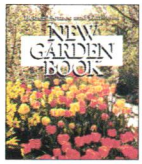
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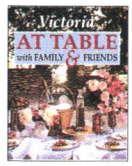
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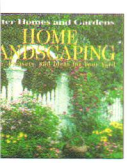
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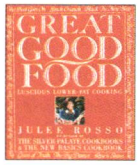
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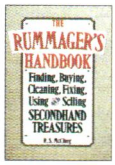
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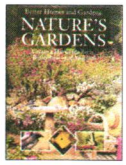
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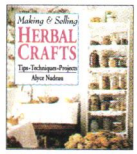
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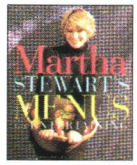
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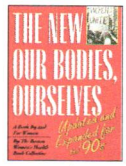
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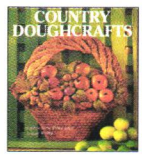
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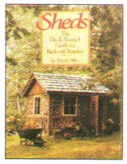
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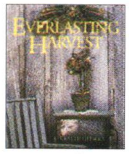
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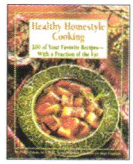
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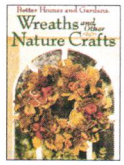
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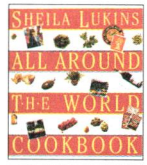
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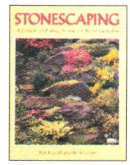
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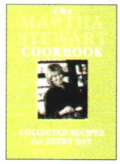
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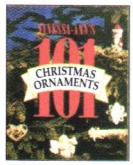
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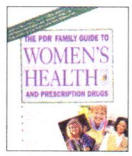
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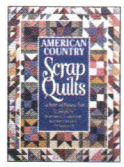
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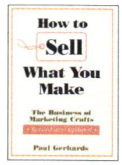
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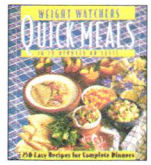
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The Seduction

What do architecture and sex have in common?

BY CATHLEEN MEDWICK



PHOTOGRAPH BY RENÉ STOELTIE

THE WOMAN IS CHASTE, demanding, and desirable. The man has something she wants, though she doesn't know it yet; in fact, she's furious that he would even think of seducing her. He's attractive, of course, a man of talent and taste. But that's not what tempts her. What she really wants is his . . . house!

His house? Well, what could be more tempting in a society where luxury (sometimes masquerading as simplicity) is de rigueur; where the only thing better than a well-appointed bathroom is a perfectly presented meal? But we're not talking here about Manhattan in the 1990s. The place Paris circa 1758—the city of the Sun King (Mar Antoinette was still a toddler), a paradise fo liberal-spending sensualists. The woman Mélite, an urbane beauty with a reputation fo good taste and good sense. Men, however dash ing, don't get very far with her. The man Trémicour (his very name is a heart aflutter), wh is bent on her seduction. The two match wits i Jean-François de Bastide's eighteenth-centur novella, recently published for the first time i English, called *The Little House: An Architectur Seduction* (Princeton Architectural Press). Th tiny book, with its luscious descriptions of for courts and foreplay, is the neatest intersection o architecture and sexuality since Dominiqu Francon fell—like a ton of bricks, so to speak—fo Howard Roark in *The Fountainhead*. Those of u who, as teenagers, devoured that book with rap ture (thinking the thrill was edificial) can apprec ate the delight a young Parisienne might hav taken in a book so filled with tips on how to re sist, then artfully succumb to, a man.

Anthony Vidler's thoughtful preface to *Th Little House* describes the book as a "'marriage' o two literary genres: the erotic libertine novel and the architectural treatise"—a hybrid favore by Laclos (*Les Liaisons Dangereuses*) and th Marquis de Sade (*La Philosophie dans le boudoir* The author, though not an architect, devise this book with a friend, an architecture educa tor. Vidler supposes, correctly, that in the "co and transparent environments of modernism there would be little if any place for eroticism unless in the "suspended fear of the void of infinite space . and in the pleasure of the superman who overcomes this fear (Miss Francon, meet Mr. Roark.)

In the softer but no less rigorously designed world of Méli and Trémicour, it was usual for a rich and sexually ambitiou man to build a *petite maison,* an elegant retreat in which to con duct his intrigues. Erected alongside the Seine near Paris, thes buildings became notorious bastions of libertinage; curiou virgins fell to ruin there. Louis XV's Petit Trianon, with i


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grottoes and gilded boudoirs, was a perfect example of this architectural "folly," so called because, typically, such buildings were *folie,* screened by foliage against voyeurs. Whenever Marie Antoinette became bored, her love struck (but initially impotent) husband, Louis XIV, regaled her with structures, each more elaborate than the next; he even built her a rustic village at the far end of Versailles to assuage her bucolic desires. These buildings, beautifully and suggestively photographed by François Halard (a contributor to this magazine) in Marie-France Boyer's *The Private Realm of Marie Antoinette* (Thames & Hudson), give substance to the period house plans nestled inside Bastide's provocative text.

Mélite bets Trémicour that she can take a guided tour of his *petite maison* without falling prey to its charms—or his. To Trémicour, this house has always served as an erotic device of the first order—no woman has emerged from it intact. His tour is intricately plotted to propel Mélite from the delightful forecourt, with its pastoral façade and tantalizing peepholes into orchards and gardens, into the very bosom of the house itself. But Mélite lingers. She is enchanted, and so mischievous that she drives her suitor wild.

"He took her hand and drew her closer and closer to the house; two or three times, she seemed to acquiesce, and would let herself be brought just so far, and then, after a few steps, would naughtily go back to examine once more what she had seen already."

He brings her to the center of the main courtyard (its perfect proportions make her gasp), then to a circular salon—perhaps like the queen's at Versailles—that opens onto a garden: "Indeed, so voluptuous was this salon that it inspired the tenderest feelings, feelings that one believes one could have only for its owner." The paneling in the mirrored room is lilac; the dome is painted by the fashionable artist Hallé with scenes of love. Mélite, unlike more frivolous women, can fully appreciate these marvels—she has been educating herself, after all, while others have squandered their time on romance. So she determinedly enters the first bedroom, with its "jonquil-colored bed of Peking fabric, brocaded with resplendent hues," and its Turkish blue marble. Here she keeps mute; she's begun to fear the strong emotions evoked by this decor. The next room is more threatening: it is a boudoir, "a place that needs no introduction to the woman who enters, her heart and soul recognizing it at once." In her boudoir at the Petits Appartements in Paris, Marie-France Boyer tells us, Marie Antoinette welcomed her children and her intimates, including her lover, the Swede Axel de Fersen. Mélite, too, lingers in this most intimate of rooms, adjusting a pin in her coiffure before one of its many mirrors, while the wily Trémicour observes her in another. Disconcerted, she enters a new room; he follows. He "could have taken advantage of her ecstasy to . . . make her listen to his words of love, but he would rather that his victory progress at the pace of pleasure." This is a man who knows how to wait.

This house has always served Trémicour as an erotic device of the first order—no woman has emerged from it intact

She is in the bathroom now, where "the walls were decorated with pagodas, crystals and shells, along with bronzes by Cafieri in seashore motifs. . . . One of the bath's two niches was occupied by a tub, the other by a bed of embroidered Indian mousseline, hung with tassels." Compare the queen's bathroom at the Petits Appartements, "the walls adorned with stucco decorations on the theme of water . . . an exquisitely delicate gossamer pattern of fountains, dolphins, lobsters, swans, shells and white corals. . . . After taking her bath behind a two-way mirror, the queen liked to be massaged on a high daybed in this beautiful, light room."

Mélite is basically done for. "I can not take this any longer," she says. "This house is too beautiful. There is nothi comparable on earth. . . ." With a stu ied casualness, Trémicour takes her pa a water closet designed to imitate arbor. An opening in the closet's curv ceiling (think of the dome in Mar Antoinette's Laiterie) offers a view blue skies and birds, as he leads h into a garden graced by reflecti pools, allées, and grottoes such as t young queen enjoyed at the Triano Mélite is frightened by a well-planne burst of artillery; Trémicour grasps h to his chest. She wants to leave, but persuades her to view his pièce de rés tance, an apartment to the left of t salon. Rooms open upon rooms, ea more charming than the next.

"Forgetting herself more and mo Mélite sat down, and began to ask o question after another. S went through all that she h seen, asking the prices of thin and the names of artists and ar sans"—she is, after all, bou geois to the core. Now that has aroused her appetit Trémicour offers her a meal i room where ingeniously rigg tables drop away into the flo and newly laden ones descen from the ceiling. Such stunni equipment (like that found the two-kitchen houses of today) co noted wealth beyond imagining: wonder Mélite can hardly lift her for From the dining room it is only a f nervous steps into the second boudo where Mélite will meet her fate.

It is only in a footnote to the text th the reader discovers how, in Bastid first version of *The Little House,* Méli successfully (though strenuously) resis her suitor and wins her bet. That is t alternative ending: Mélite victoriou Marie Antoinette basking in postrev lutionary bliss; Dominique Franc adding on a couple of rooms of her ow But old structures fall hard. The lesso of *The Little House* are simple and pro ably inevitable: nobody's perfect, b some buildings are; good taste is aphrodisiac; and every folly earns just reward.

"Reading Room," *a column about books, will r every month.* **Cathleen Medwick** *is a featu editor of this magazine.*



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Shelf Life
books to consider this month



BACKYARD BUGS Text and photographs by Robin Kittrell Laughlin (*Chronicle Books*). To quote its own jacket, *Backyard Bugs* "is crawling with gorgeous photographs"—of beautiful bug objects. Each sits on a white page, in purest isolation, without context or connection to nature. Not a leaf, twig, or blade of grass intrudes on this sterile aesthetic. So much for biodiversity.

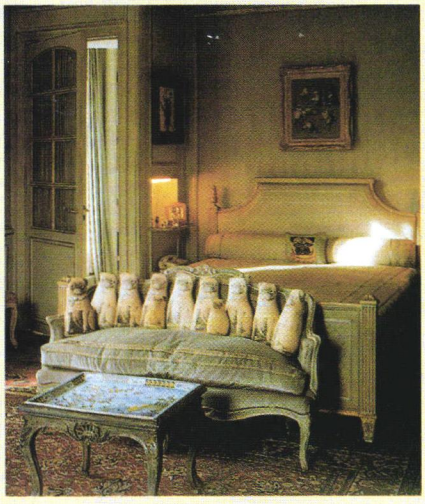
Into the foreword of this modern bio-vacuum "noted . . . bug-lover Sue Hubbell" dares to introduce the world's foremost myrmecologist, E. O. Wilson, only to confound his landmark concept "biophilia" (love of living things) by misspelling it—four times—"Biofilia." Life daughter? No love of the biosphere here.

Many of these insect *objets trouvés* are not backyard bugs at all, but celebrity ranch bugs rounded up on the three ranches of Jane Fonda and Ted Turner. Writes Laughlin, "Jane acted as my early editor, helping me to organize and distill my thoughts. . . ." Big thoughts: the all-beige Carolina Locust "can look boring until you begin to appreciate the subtleties. I think of it as the Calvin Klein of the insect world." Laughlin's bugs undergo anthropomorphosis, not metamorphosis. The Southeastern Lubber Grasshopper has a "sedentary lifestyle that lends itself to sex addiction." Biophilia?

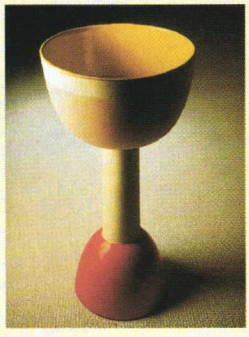
She drops few clues as to where to meet these critters. "One evening in southern New Mexico, I was doing the floor part of a 'Jane Fonda' routine . . . and found myself face-to-face with this Giant Vinegarone." A Ten-lined June Beetle materializes "in a cube-shaped brown box with a chic khaki-colored sheer bow on top."

This acutely cute book—ISBN-slugged "Arthropoda"—trivializes that phylum, and several others, as is the wont of Design World when focusing in tight on a part of creation successfully designed four hundred million years ago. —Patti Hagan

ROYAL OBSESSION The Duchess of Windsor's infatuation with pugs was matched only by her husband's pack-rat behavior.



THE PRIVATE WORLD OF THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF WINDSOR by Hugo Vickers (*Abbeville Press*). When the Duchess of Windsor was in failing health, some of her staff made a noble nod to clean living. They stashed about ten thousand photographs under the lid of a bathtub, safe from vulturous curiosity seekers. Now, even the most refined among us can indulge: this lavishly produced book is awash in previously unpublished pictures. The Windsors are bizarrely fascinating in the details: her obsession with pugs, his insistence on saving everything, even old golf pants. Vickers's sometimes understated style (the Duke was "not a bookish man") offsets their indulgent one. What saves the book from scrapbook-bio status is a section on refurbishing the couple's Paris mansion. Unfortunately, unless you have pockets as deep as the House of Windsor's, you'll never see it. A proposed tour, for one, may run about $30,000. —Katrine Ames



EVERYDAY SACRED An early Sottsass chalice.

THE GLASS HOUSE by John Hix (*Phaidon*). John Hix, a Toronto architect, believes that the design of glass houses should be not only innovative but, in a very real sense, enlightened. "The simplistic hermetically sealed, but often highly styled structures of the late twentieth century," he writes, with the passion of a latter-day Thomas Carlyle, "depend upon improvident machinery using excessive energy just to make them habitable."



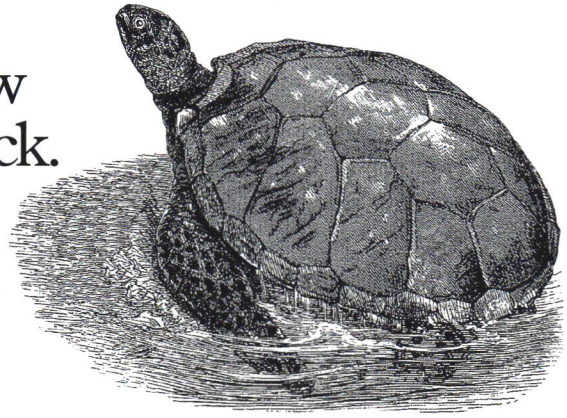
THE LIGHT FANTASTIC A Manchester iro and-glass arcade designed in the 1870s.

In Hix's view, today's architects need take a lesson from their forebears, w knew that a "hothouse" without solar h was an environmental anomaly. His her are often nineteenth-century botani bent on reinventing the tropics in t chilly British Isles; but he also admi such twentieth-century visionaries Bruno Taut, architect of the 1914 Gl House at Cologne. This book, filled w drawings of antique boilers and photos fabulous private conservatories (one of t few modern examples is Emilio Amba Lucille Halsell Conservat in San Antonio), explores t pleasures and pitfalls of l under glass. —C.

CERAMICS by Ettore Sotts (*Chronicle Books*). It's an ev when the mastermind Memphis, that anarchic It ian design studio founded 1981, passionately glosses own work. If Sottsass wer volcano, he could not sp forth anything hotter than this. He v bally smashes Tuscan pottery (made fr poor clay, for use in Medici villas "wh people used their hands to eat chick roasted on the spit . . . between one mur and the next") and celebrates ceram from the Orient, where, he says, craftsm make the everyday sacred. That's wl Sottsass, physically but perhaps not en tionally recovered from a catastrophic ness, seems desperate to do with his prir pots. In this book they are huge (one page), and sometimes terrifyingly beau ful. The book itself is something of an a fact, a blend of postmodern iconocla and primeval energy. —C.

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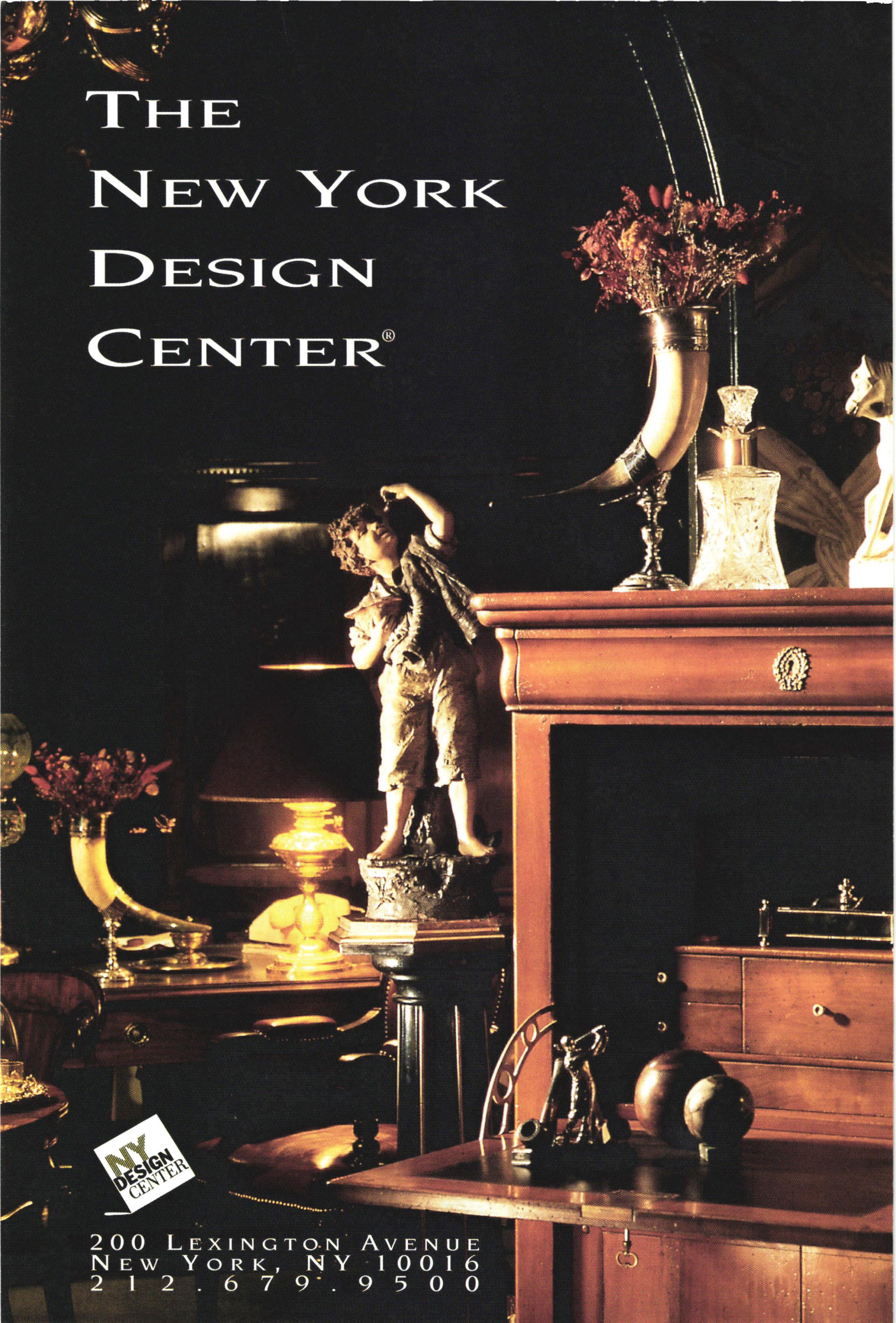
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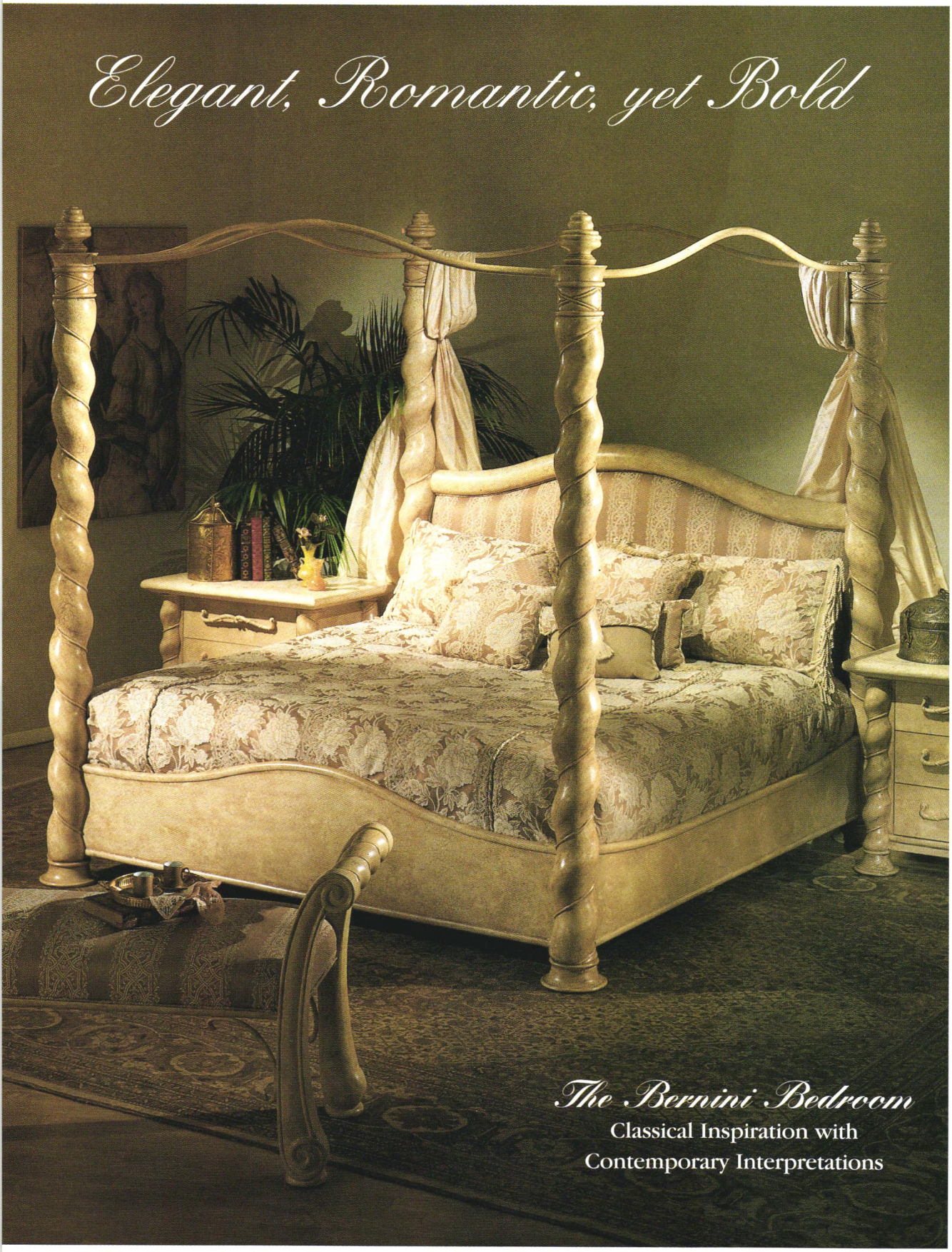
The vase does come from MURANO indeed,
but it is not a Vase.
It is a lamp: "OA" designed by Philippe Starck for



FLOS
MURANO

VENINI AND FLOS GROUPS' COMPANY

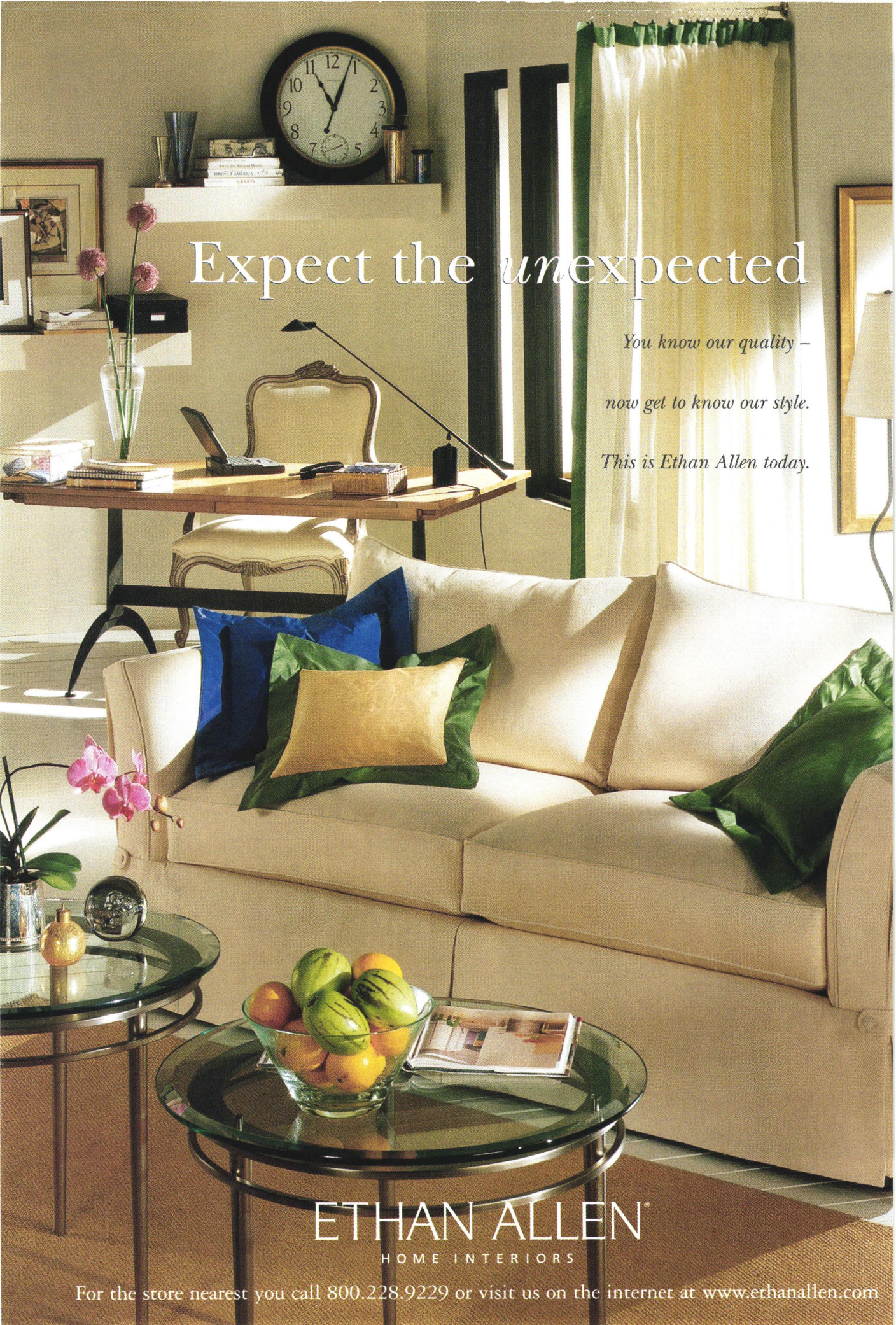
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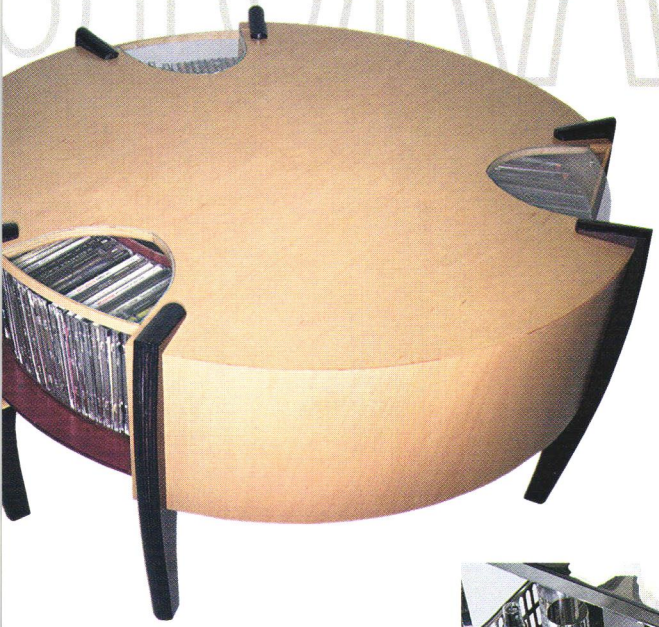
ZIP-TABLE ›

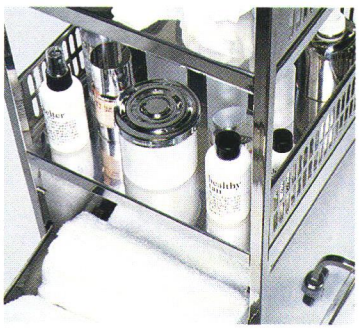
"A tent inspired me," says Sigmar Willnauer of his lightweight table, which camped out recently at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Easily collapsible, it has a zipper that's functional but decorative. The birch plywood table — sorry, bears not included — also comes in black and brown. $199. To order, call 510-652-3288.

BATHROOM CART WITH HAMPER ⌄

This industrial-strength stainless-steel combo keeps you and your necessities looking polished. Standing more than five feet tall, beautiful as well as functional, it has lots of shelf space and a compartment where you can stash anything you want out of sight. Built on wheels, this tower of power has a variety of optional accessories, including a mirror and added shelving. $1,450. To order, call 800-338-7809.

STORAGE







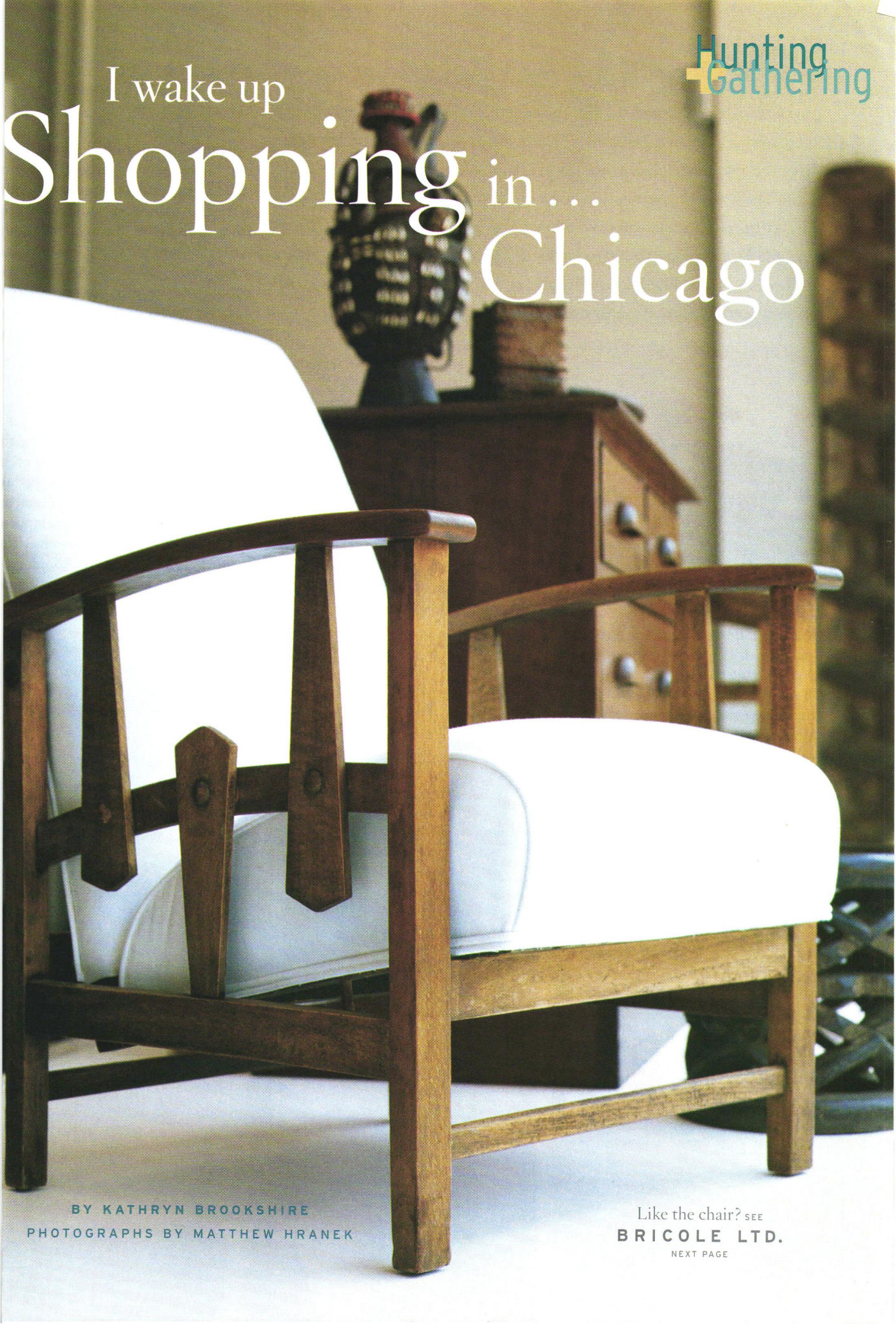
HARLOTTE CD TABLE ^

roduct designer Andy Hope und the inspiration for his spirlike, maple table in *Charlotte's eb.* Almost three feet in diameter, it holds up to 150 CDs on a volving wheel so all your discs e easy to reach. $1,350. To order, ll 415-512-1043.

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I wake up Shopping in... Chicago



BY KATHRYN BROOKSHIRE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATTHEW HRANEK

Like the chair? SEE BRICOLE LTD. NEXT PAGE

Hunting & Gathering CHICAGO

It starts with a challenge. To find the best of shopping in Chicago, pack a map, have a plan, and be patient. There are galleries and antiques in the River North area; eclectic housewares on Oak Street; elegant shops in suburban Winnetka; an auction house in Oak Park; and a bountiful florist in Old Town. Chicago caters to every taste, but you have to walk, drive, take the El, and poke around to satisfy it. There's a bonus: as the showcase for Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Mies van der Rohe, the city is an architectural feast. Your feet may get tired, but your eyes won't.



KELMSCOTT GALLERY ⌄

4611 North Lincoln Ave. 312-784-2559

TUES-SAT 11AM-6PM

"I simply had to own the building, and the gallery ended up being a fortuitous afterthought," jokes Scott Elliott. His gallery offers **TABLES, CHAIRS, AND ORIGINAL DRAWINGS FROM ARCHITECTS** such as Wright, Sullivan, and Charles Rennie MacKintosh. Not-for-sale dividend: the 1922 façade, designed by Sullivan himself.



‹ ARTS 220

895 1/2 Green Bay Rd. Winnetka

847-501-3084

TUES-SAT 11AM-4PM AND BY APPOINTMENT

Her twin brother owns Moss, the hip, modernist store in New York, but Fern Simon is doing fine on her own, thanks. Among the prizes in her twentieth-century design store: a Carlo Bugatti corner chair; a much-sought-after **JEAN PROUVÉ CHAIR** ($1,600) in a weathered splash of orange; a George Nelson coffee table ($1,100); and a Harry Bertoia sculpture.

BRICOLE LTD.

902 Green Bay Rd. Winnetka

847-441-6310

MON-SAT 10AM-5PM

Customers are already flocking to th new boutique, just thirty minutes ou side Chicago, and pouncing on wood artifacts, furniture, and accessori from Indonesia, Burma, and Sou Africa. Our personal favorites: **ARTS AND CRAFTS ADJUSTABL OAK CHAIR UPHOLSTERED IN WHI COTTON** ($725) and a lofty Burme teak-and-glass curio cabinet with carv lions poised at the feet ($2,800).

ELEMENTS ⌄

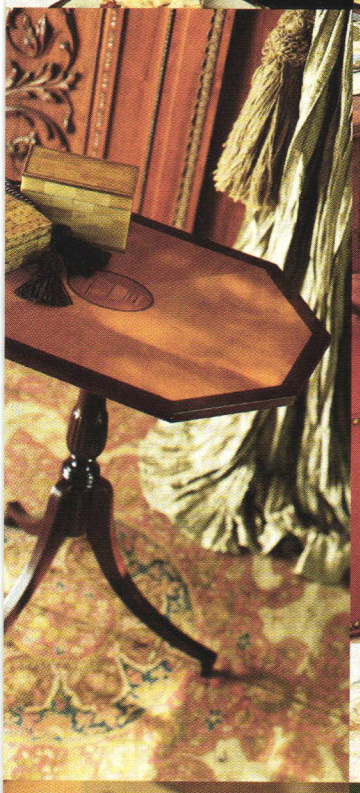
102 East Oak St. 312-642-6574

MON-SAT 10AM-6PM, SUN 12PM-5PM

What happens when you trot the glob buy beautiful pieces, and can't fit ever thing in at home? Jeannine DalPra a Toby Glickman put them in Elemen bronze vases from Japan; contempora American furniture; and, from Afric **A BEADED MONEY VEST**. Topping t list of must-haves: square grass-gre plates from Provence ($16-$95).

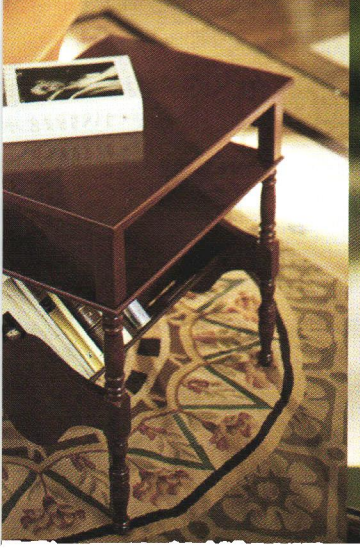


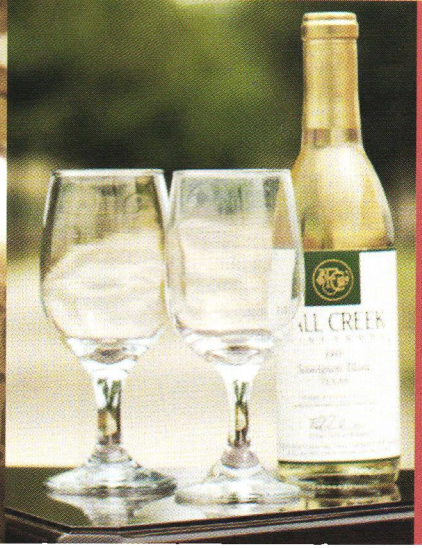






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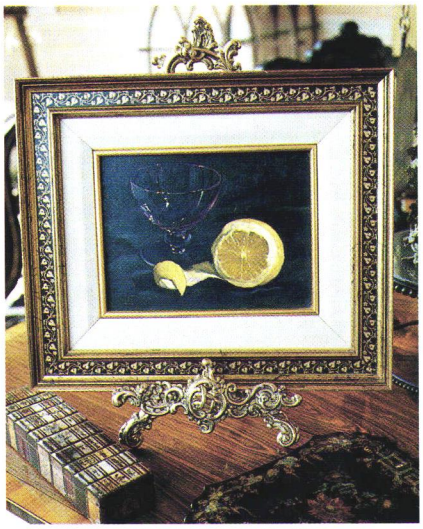




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CHICAGO



< PORTALS LTD.

230 West Huron St. 312-642-1066

TUES-FRI 9:30AM-4:30PM, SAT 11AM-4PM
AND BY APPOINTMENT

"Art is always a magical word," says Nancy McIlvaine. The magic in her gallery includes impressive nineteenth-century antiques, **PAINTINGS, AND WHIMSICAL DECORATIVE ART**. What's flying off the shelves? English biscuit tins ($375-$1,200), including a colorful handled one that looks suspiciously like a purse, and Wendy Ellis-Smith's shiny découpage boxes ($400-$1,600).

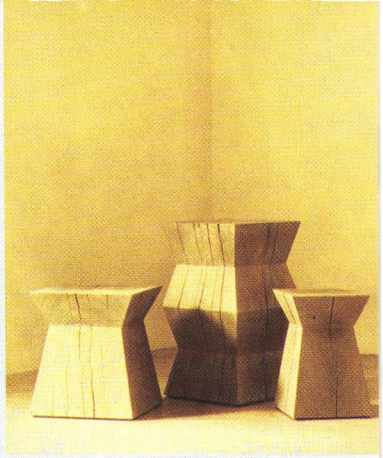
CHRISTA'S LTD. ⌄

217 West Illinois St. 312-222-2520

MON-SAT 10AM-5PM

A filled-to-the-rafters antiques shop specializing in (but hardly limited to) **NINETEENTH-CENTURY FRENCH FURNITURE**. You'll have to thread your way through chairs, plates, desks, glasses, silver and wooden boxes. Ripe for picking: a large Venetian etched mirror ($1,500) and a butter-yellow tea set ($600).





THREE FOR ALL Nagato tables and a Yqu pedestal from the Christian Liaigre for Hc Hunt Collection. "Decoration," Liaigre sa "must not be a fashion."

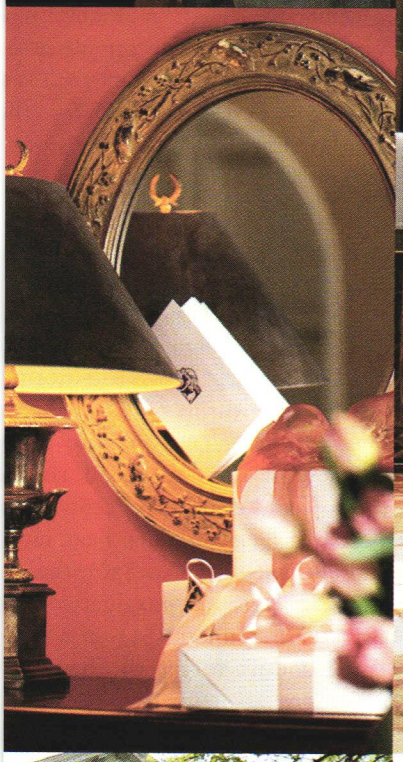
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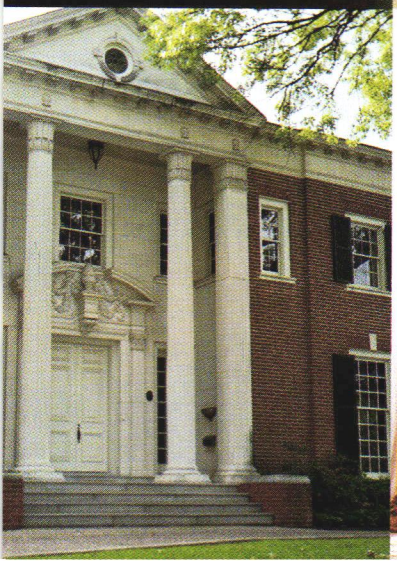
This designers' den of furnitu fabrics, appliances, and decorati objects houses nearly 1,000 sho rooms, mostly to the trade only. T Mart remains the largest trade cent in the world (and second only to t Pentagon as America's largest buil ing). Specialized kitchen, bath, a building-product showrooms a open to the public. So is the **DESI IDEA CENTER**, where **KITCHENA DUPONT CORIAN**, and **CALLARD OSGOOD, LTD.**, are just a few of t manufacturers on hand. Get a buye guide of all the mart represen tives or make an appointment wi the new **BLOOMINGDALE'S DESI STUDIO**. Interior designers offer th talent and access to the resident home furnishings showrooms. Samp **RICHARD HIMMEL; MIKE BELL; A WILLIAM SWITZER & ASSOCIAT** for antiques reproductions and dec rative furniture. For contempora furniture, see **PRANICH & ASSO ATES**, or **HOLLY HUNT**. "Style is abo choices," says Hunt, who displa works from Christian Liaigre, as w as her own designs.







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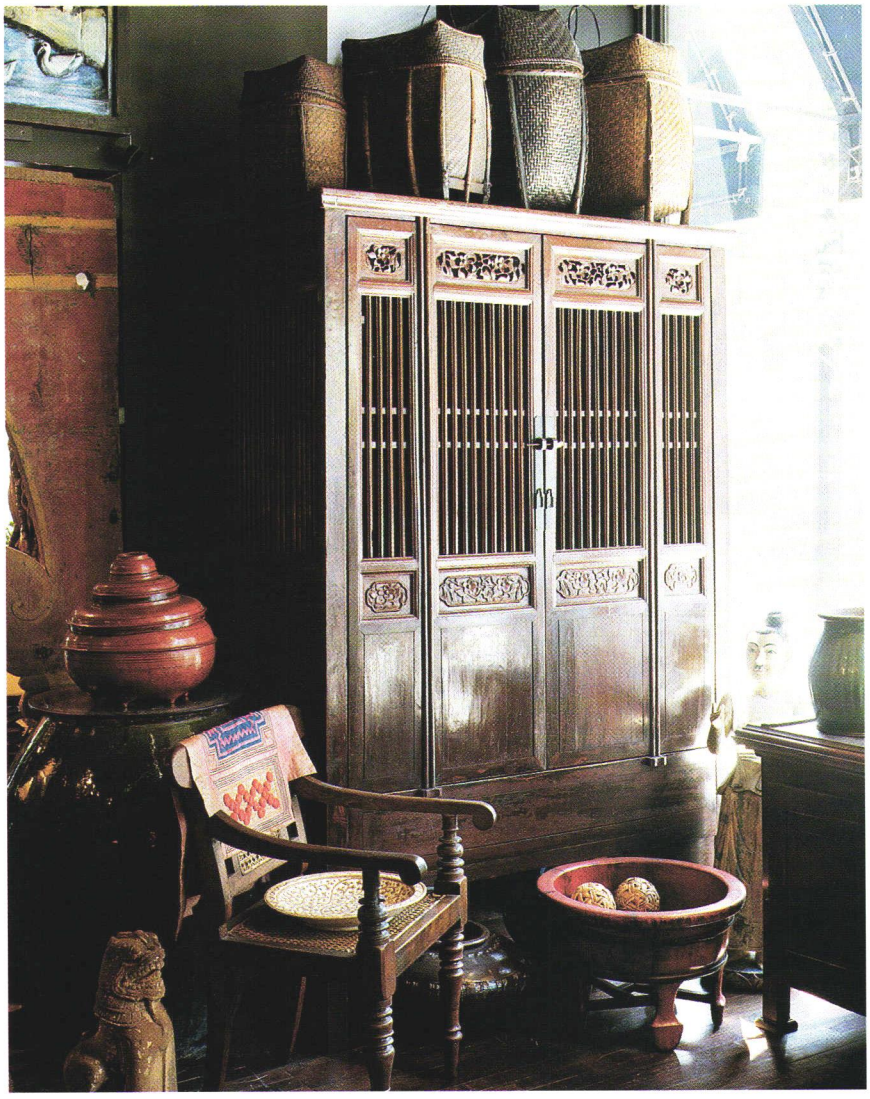
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THE URBAN GARDENER >

1006 West Armitage Ave. 312-477-2070

MON-FRI 10AM-7PM, SAT 10AM-6PM, SUN 11AM-5PM

This longtime *House & Garden* favorite remains a warm and inviting oasis. A multitude of topiaries dresses the front window; **GARDEN TOOLS, HATS, AND RUBBER CLOGS** nestle inside. Upstairs, *The Garden Primer* and *Hardy Geraniums* line the bookshelves near colorful, old-fashioned tablecloths and linens. Catering to rooftop gardeners, the store stocks a large supply of fiberglass pots. One to three feet high ($150-$500), they're lightweight and decorative.

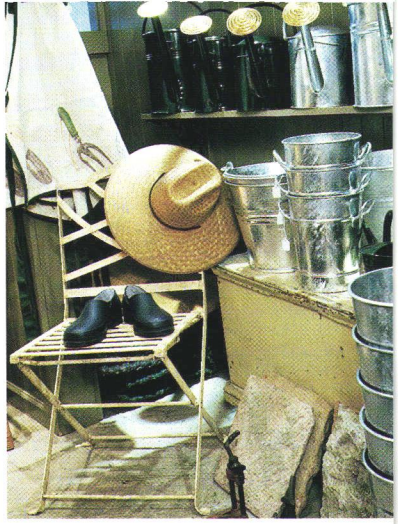


THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE ^

72 West Hubbard St. 312-755-1266

MON-FRI 10AM-7PM, SAT 10AM-6PM

The region that connects Thailand, Burma, and Laos, known as the Golden Triangle, fascinates owners Douglas Van Tress and Chauwarin Tuntisak. The two import such items as **BURMESE WATER JARS** with deep muddy red, brown, and black patinas ($350); British colonial plantation chairs; finely made Laotian rattan storage baskets ($25-$500); and delicate teak sculpture from Thailand. Their best-seller is **A CHINESE WEDDING CHEST** in a shiny red lacquer, which was originally filled with gifts and given to a bride and groom as a good-luck present. In contemporary America, however, it functions as an entertainment center ($3,200).



PRAIRIE AVENUE BOOKSHOP

418 South Wabash Ave. 800-474-27

MON-FRI 9:30AM-5:30PM, SAT 10AM-4PM

One of the largest architecture boo shops in the country, this three-tier store is a quiet, dimly lit refuge. Fr the comfort of a huge white Scotti armchair, next to a Frank Llo Wright table, you can sample **BOO ON DESIGN, ARCHITECTURE, A DRAWING** ($7-$110). Ask for th hefty catalogue, or reach the store http://www.pabook.com/p-ave.

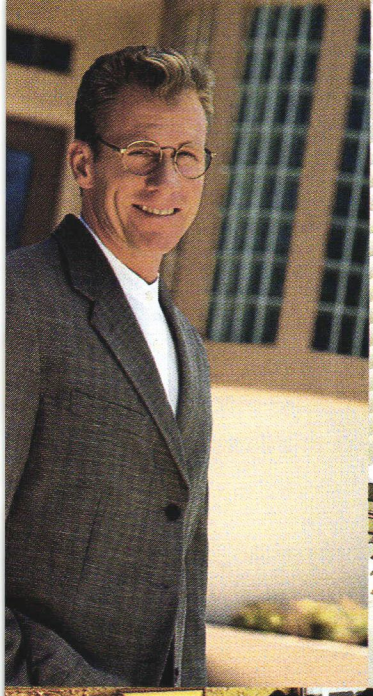
A NEW LEAF v

1645 North Wells St. 312-642-1576

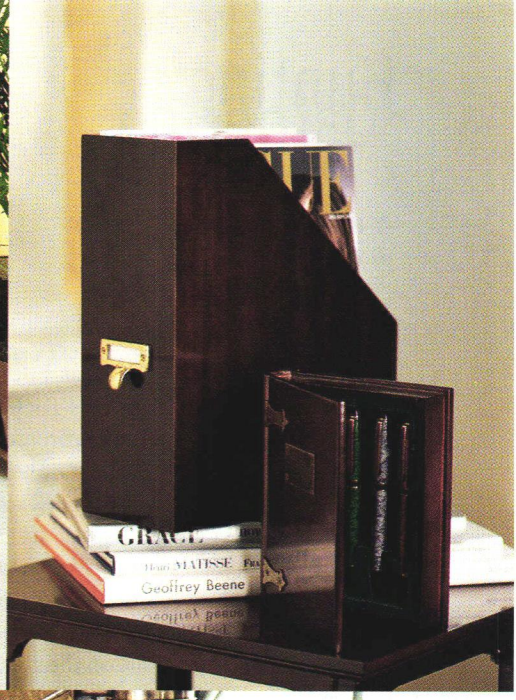
MON-FRI 9AM-8PM, SAT 9AM-7PM, SUN 9AM-6

Marion Parry is more than a hip a creative florist. "I love to enter pe ple's private worlds of discovery," s says, and urges customers to expe ment with the "extended theme throughout her store. A Pacific Nort west area serves up polar bear, moo and elk plates ($18.50-$30); the ar and-crafts area has imaginative birc twig table runners ($14.50 and u Parry doesn't forget the basics: h enormous assortment of calla lili tulips, roses, **HELICONIAS, DAISIE EVEN ARTICHOKE STALKS**—spills c onto the sidewalk.



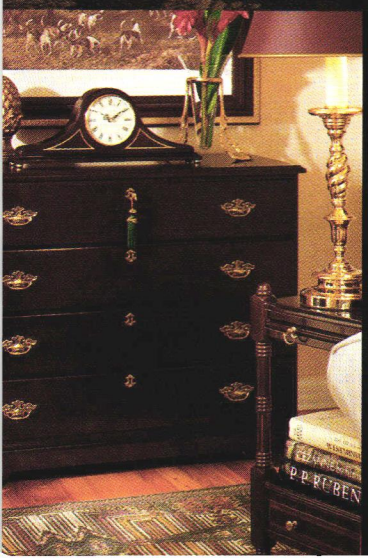


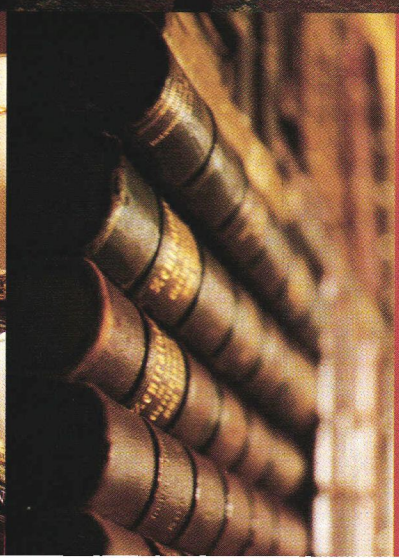






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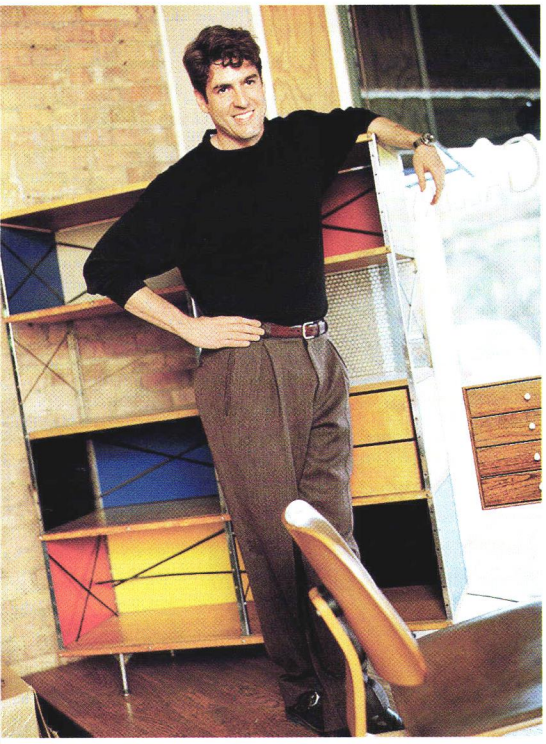
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Hunting + Gathering

THE JOHN TOOMEY GALLERY ⌄

818 North Blvd., Oak Park
708-383-5234
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

The space isn't much to look at, but the best of what it holds reflects Richard Wright's, below, discriminating eye. Works by T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings, Charles Eames, Isamu Noguchi, Warren McArthur, and George Nelson are just part of Wright's **TWENTIETH-CENTURY DESIGN** collection. Pieces are auctioned off four times a year: the next preview is August 17-24, with the sale on the 25th. If you miss it, don't despair—just come back in November.



HOUSE FOR SALE ›

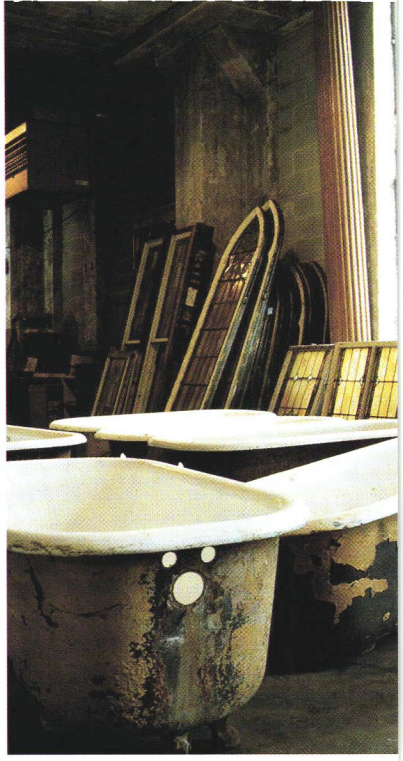
Lynn Scheir and Alice Fox McMahon
Realtors, F. C. Pilgrim & Co.
1037 Chicago Ave. Oak Park 60302
708-383-8300

318 Forest Ave., Oak Park
Six-bedroom, four-bath Frank Lloyd Wright house. Built in 1902, this brick Prairie-style residence with art-glass windows is just down the street from Wright's studio. If you're wondering about the bargain-basement asking price ($950,000), consider this: the house is in "original condition."

SALVAGE ONE ›

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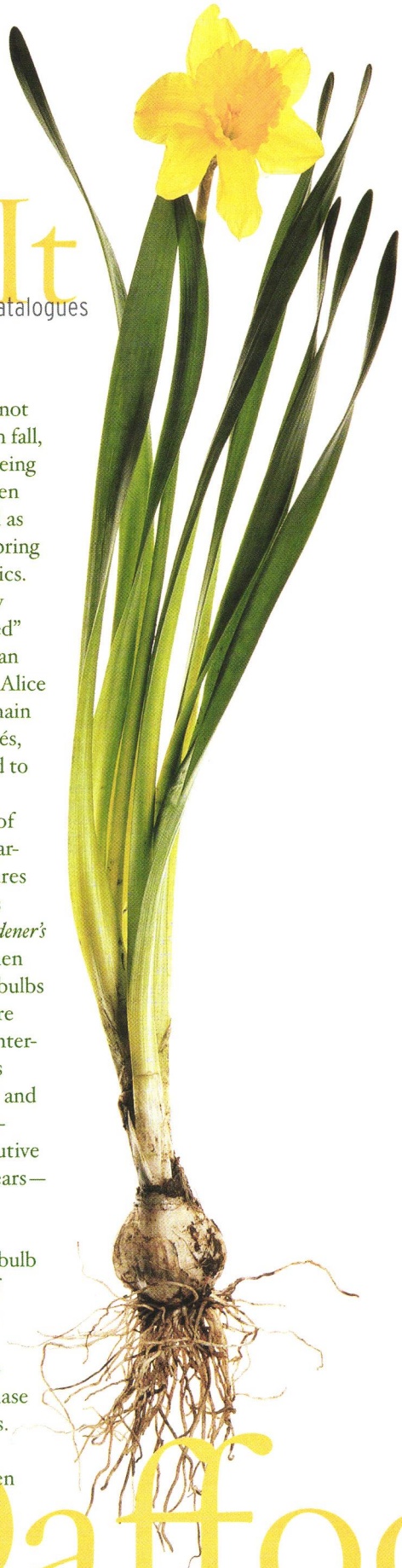
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Ship It

How to get the best out of your catalogues

BY PATTI HAGAN



Generally I eschew clichés—but not daffodils. I plant a few dozen each fall, for the Wordsworthian thrill of being taken hostage by "a host, of golden daffodils" each spring. As natural as daffodils seem to the American spring garden, they are Old World exotics.

Best known are the big, yellow trumpet daffs, "the old fat-headed" gregarious sort that appealed to an earlier Brooklyn gardener-writer Alice Morse Earle. Gold trumpets remain the most obliging of spring clichés, even if some have been colorized to pink, white, green, orange, red.

Of late, much has been made of the species mini-daffodils, and garden demand is among the pressures imperiling their wild survival. As Nina Marshall writes in *The Gardener's Guide to Plant Conservation*: "When gardeners think of the plight of bulbs in the wild, the delicate miniature daffodils . . . come to mind." Hunter-gathered, wild-dug, abused bulbs from the bulb mines of Portugal and Spain are not good garden candidates. Before investing in diminutive daffs—hoop-petticoat, angel's tears—demand to know their ultimate source. Marjorie Arundel, the Garden Club of America's great bulb conservationist and defender of "wild, patriarchal bulbs without whose genes there would be no tulips, no daffodils, and no catalogues," asks gardeners to purchase only "nursery propagated" bulbs. (Wild-harvested bulbs, briefly stashed in nursery beds, are often passed off as "nursery grown.")

GRANT E. MITSCH NOVELTY DAFFODILS (
P.O. Box 218, Hubbard, OR 97032 (503-651-27
ESTABLISHED 1927. The 69th catalogue from this fa
daffodil farm is a narcissusistic delight–by colorful w
and photo. The daffodil bios catch the idiosyncrasie
each plant, especially deportment: 'Bozely'–"golden
low flower with excellent carriage." One can go from 'F
Joy,' "svelte poise . . . tall, strong stems hold the gra
ful blooms well aloft," to 'Rapture,' "strongly refle
perianth" on the same page. Here are daffodils with
"intense green eye," a "tailored trumpet." Cross a 'Playl
and a 'Daydream' and you get 'Green Gold' "beauti
despite "quite a long neck." Mitsch sells "nothing
have not grown," and borrows from Keats to reminc
thing of beauty is a joy forever . . . and such are Daffod
Utterly daffodillic!

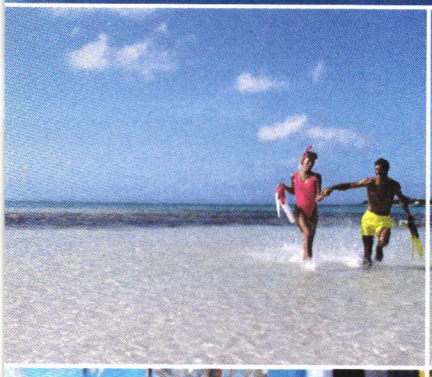
**NANCY R. WILSON SPECIES & MINIATU
NARCISSUS** ($1), 6525 Briceland-Thorn Road, C
berville, CA 95542 (707-923-2407). ESTABLISHED 1
Hybrid narcissi 'Small Talk' and 'Chit Chat' can be had f
the Wilson catalogue–but no small talk. Wilson's unem
ished list is for Species Narcissi (*Bulbocodium, Ganyme
Jonquilla, and Pseudonarcissus*); Wild Hybrids (*N. x odc
N. x tenuior*) and three dozen Hybrid Narcissi. Descript
are so microchipped they approach daffodil alge
"'Pequenita' 7y-y" means jonquil-yellow perianth-ye
corona. Wilson does explain her devotion to seed-gr
species narcissi: "These beautiful bulbs are rapidly di
pearing in the wild. . . . My aim is to preserve these g
pools for future generations."

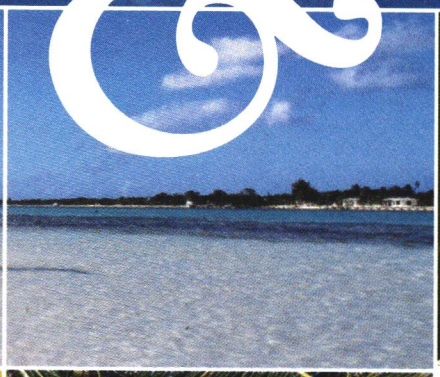
BONNIE BRAE GARDENS ($1), 1105 S.E. Chris
sen Road, Corbett, OR 97019 (503-695-5190). ES
LISHED 1984. "Daffodil Offerings 1996" includes 11 of th
Daffodil Divisions, such as Trumpet and Poeticus. Daffs
personably characterized (no photos). 'Chorus Line'
individual nodding and well-poised florets, each ir
own visual space, ascending the stem." Jazz garde
will need 'Be Bop' and 'Yazz' and can almost hear L
Armstrong in the yellow-orange 'Brer Fox': "Trumpet fl
and is frilled." This catalogue swings!

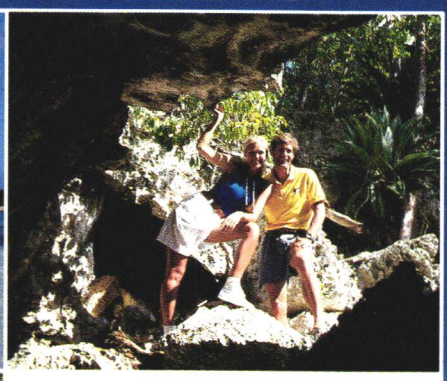
OLD HOUSE GARDENS ($2), 536 Third Street,
Arbor, MI 48103 (313-995-1486). ESTABLISHED 1993.
well-wrought catalogue carries antique, period bulbs
It is the sole mail-order source for the heirloom daffo
produced by Sisters' Bulb Farm, a Louisiana nursery be
in 1918 by the Jones sisters' grandmother. Bulbsman S
Kunst states that "Old House Gardens bulbs are the r
authentic available," adding, "Everything I sell I trial gr
The earliest known dates of introduction accompany e
daffodil: 'Butter and Eggs,' "by 1777"; 'Hoop Petticoats,'
1629?"; 'Campernelle,' "by 1601"; 'Queen Anne's Jonquil,'
1611." Many, as noted, are "available nowhere else."

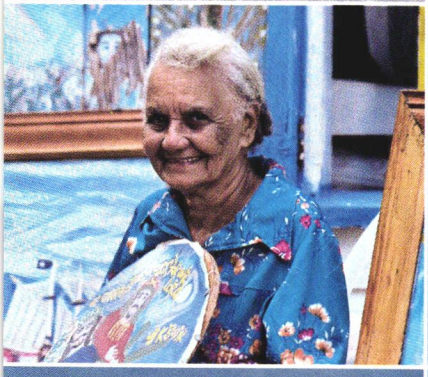
PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD PIERCE

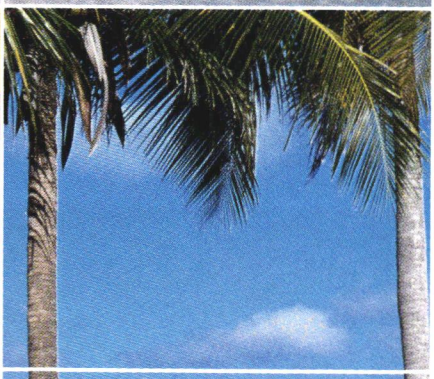
THE CAYMAN ISLANDS OURS & YOURS

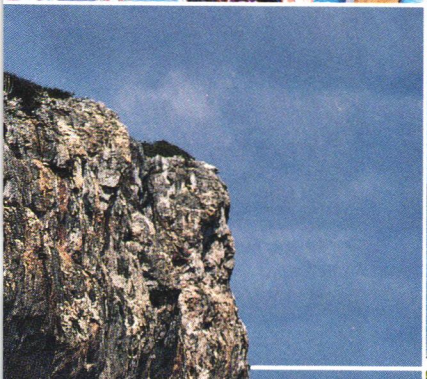




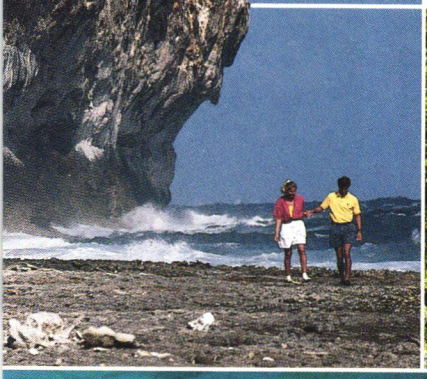














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our teeming waters and
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our peaceful shores.

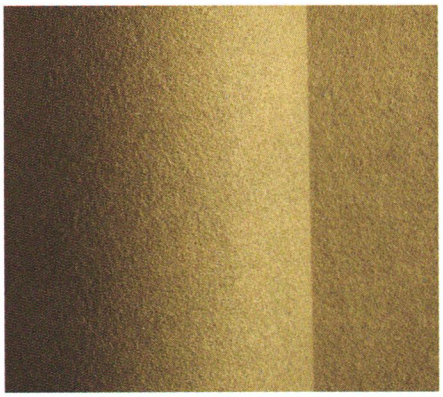


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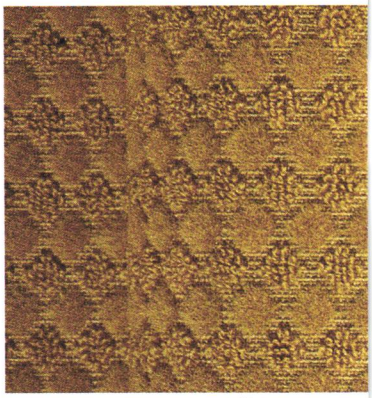
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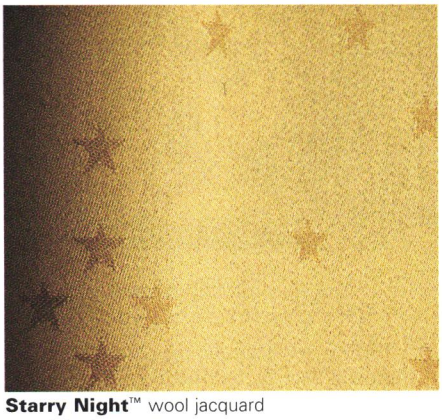
Limousine Cloth® broadcloth 1976
boleta



Courting Cranes™ tapestry
crowned crane



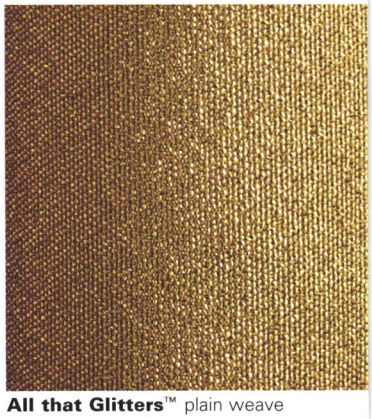
Diamonds in the Rough™ épingle
mustard seed



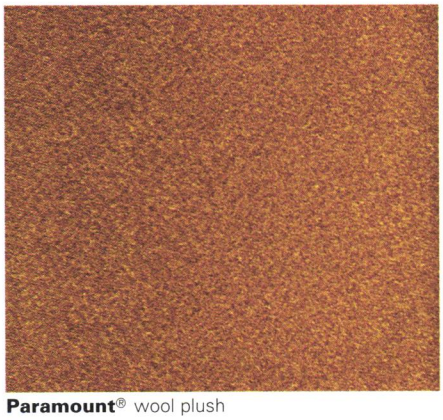
Starry Night™ wool jacquard
camel & vicuna



Diva™ rhinestones on silk
topaz/champagne



All that Glitters™ plain weave
gold plate



Paramount® wool plush
amber



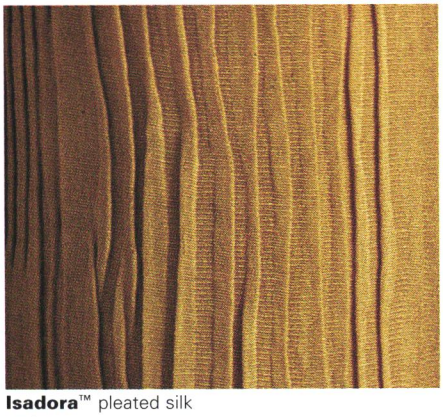
Spread Your Wings™ jacquard
scarlet tanager



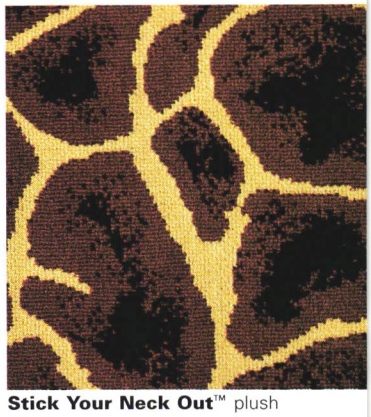
Corde du Roi™ vertical cut-pile
currant



Pasha™ linen velvet
cumin



Isadora™ pleated silk
malama



Stick Your Neck Out™ plush
giraffe

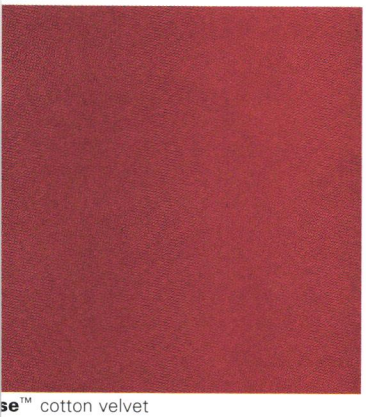
Photography: Bill Kontzias, textiles; John Stember, portrait • Design: Virginia Atkinson Design & Company • © Copyright 1996 Gretchen Bellinger Inc



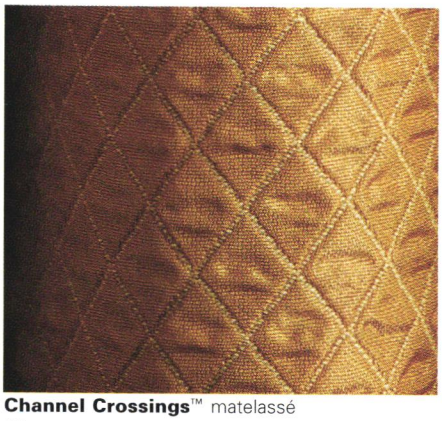
Illusions™ jacquard
parkle larvae



On the Right Track™ chenille stripe
alabaster cities



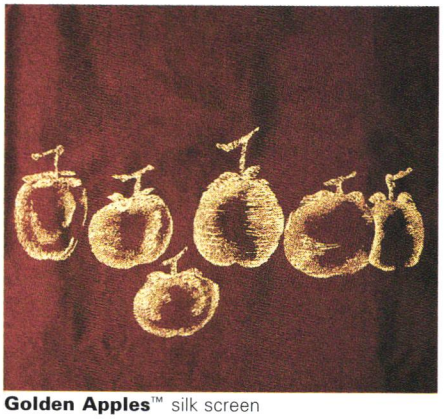
se™ cotton velvet
obin



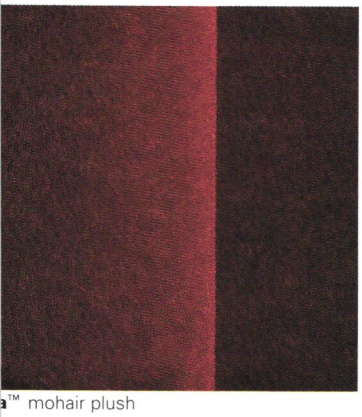
Channel Crossings™ matelassé
24 carat



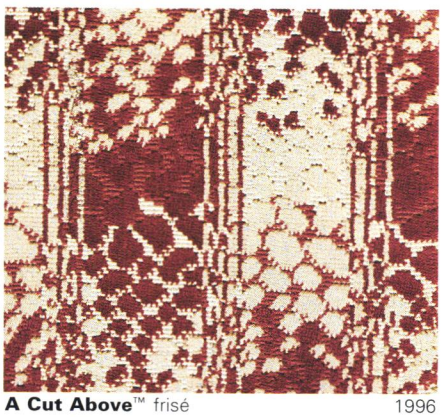
Talk™ pocket weave
roses



Golden Apples™ silk screen
stayman winesap



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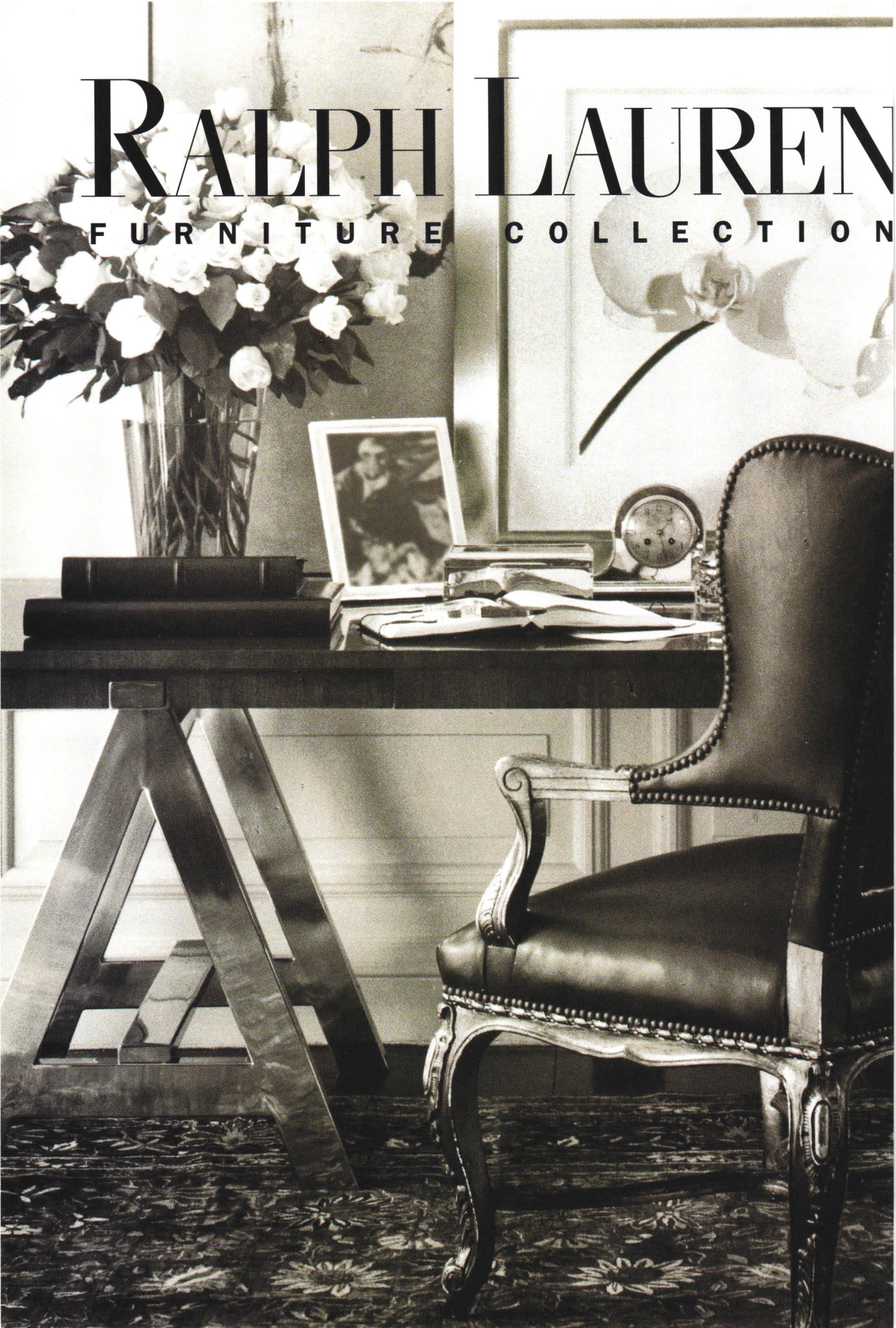
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Fine & Mellow

BY SUZANNE SLESIN



Traditional decorating has a new look. It begins here



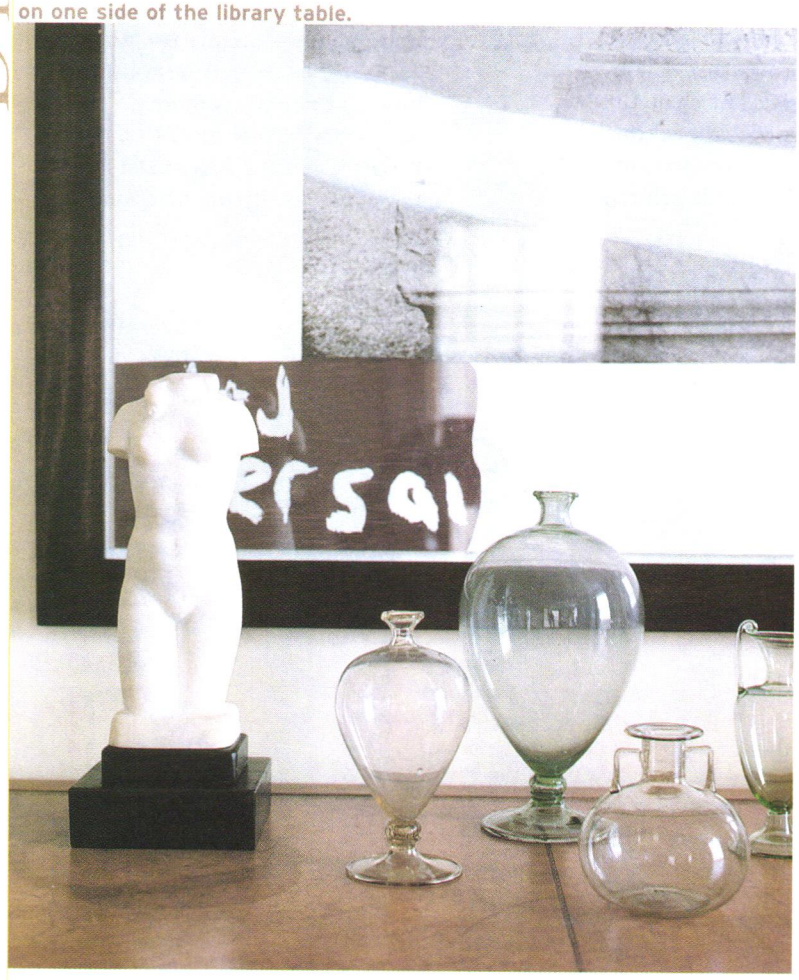
PHOTOGRAPHED BY FRANÇOIS HALARD
STYLED BY CAROLINA IRVING





Discreet

A 1990 mixed-media print by Julian Schnabel hangs above a French 1940s library table in the living room, previous pages. The small-scale limestone mantelpiece, left, was custom designed. The sofa, above, is slipcovered for a more relaxed look. Venini glass and a 1938 marble torso by Bruno Mankowski, below, are grouped on one side of the library table.



An old-world look. A modern attitude. A sense of elegance. A luxurious but unintimidating style. A light and airy feeling. Nothing complicated. Sure.

Add to these prerequisites what interior designer Jed Johnson and architect Alan Wanzenberg—who undertook the renovation of a 5,000-thousand-square-foot Manhattan apartment—described as "a real effort to make it all look like we never touched it."

Quite a tall order for an apartment in a quintessentially 1930s building that New York financier Vincent Astor commissioned as a residence for himself and his friends. What it meant for Johnson and Wanzenberg was rethinking, as they have on many other projects, the concept of grandeur and luxury. The clients—a couple with three children—chose the partners for their ability to keep decorative excesses in check, their refined sense of color, and their European taste in furnishings. The designers developed a plan that matched flair with restraint.

They also made a commitment to an aesthetic of understatement. The airy rooms include a large living room in tones of beige and gray; a suitably atmospheric library with sensuous, silk draperies; and a master bedroom suite that is soothing without being boring. Together, they epitomize the new look of traditional decorating. Designers and clients had a mutual goal: to renovate the space but make it look as if it were an old, family apartment in which nothing had been changed.

"The most daring thing that anyone can do is to pull back," says Wanzenberg, whose job it was to create the right architectural envelope

for the comfortable yet refined decor that was masterminded by Johnson, his partner since 1982. The result is an interior that, like Johnson himself, speaks in a whisper. "Achieving quality does not have to be associated with something outrageous or alienating" is the way Wanzenberg puts it.

The designers reorganized the interior architecture to celebrate the open park and river views, and to draw in the limpid eastern light. Johnson and Wanzenberg had already worked on a similar apartment in the same building, so they were able to confront the technical obstacles of installing central air-conditioning and new wiring and plumbing. "The idea was to be realistic about how long construction takes before being too creative," says Wanzenberg. "We never felt the need to leave a strong imprint."

The space was redesigned with a new passageway that leads from the foyer to the kitchen, and a tall door that opens from the living room into the dining room, and offers an as-seen-from-the-wings glimpse of the huge antique Irish scagliola (colored plaster that substitutes for marble) urns by the window.

The decor was meticulously orchestrated by Johnson and his associate Christine Cain with furniture that is mostly French in style and provenance. Unobtrusive finishings—matte brushed-nickel finish on the hardware and terrazzo that was matched to the existing floor of the elevator hall—all contribute to the exquisite sense of custom tailoring. The smooth-as-silk painted



Refined

A pair of 18th-century Italian carved-wood sconces, above, frame a 1995 painting by Richmond Burton. The Venetian glass chandelier, striped-silk draperies, huge 19th-century Irish scagliola urns, 63-inch-diameter table, and the Regency-style dining chairs, right, give the room a feeling of grandeur yet keep it from being intimidating. In the library, below, the leather on the Louis XV-style furniture has been restored, yet retains a patina.







A French 1940s mirrored dressing table from Jansen of *verre églomisé*, or back-painted glass, and gilded bronze, above, reigns in the master bedroom. The bed, right, designed by Johnson, and dressed for the summer, is framed with a gun-metal canopy finished off with brass finials. Brice Marden etchings hang on the wall. The painted bedside table is one of a pair also designed by Johnson for the room. The charming painted side table, below, is from a Paris flea market.



finish on the walls is the apotheosis of the approach. "The paint is very subtle and offers a variety of tone," says Johnson. "It's a nightmare to maintain, but we did it anyway." The clients have taken a rather relaxed attitude toward the living room, in spite of its delicate walls and pale upholstery.

Yet it's not every client who could go along with a designer who suggests that the silk draperies and the linen sofa in the living room should resemble plain brown-paper bags—especially when the fabrics would have to be hand-blocked in France. "Some people would not have understood what all the fuss was about," says Johnson. One of his talents is the ability to work within an emphatically traditional vernacular yet gently nudge it toward modernity. Johnson felt that the original mantelpiece in the living room, for example, was "overpowering." He decided to scale it down so dramatically that when first installed it looked, well, too small in the empty room until the furniture was placed around it. Then, Johnson pronounced it "fine." Inspired by the work of French designer Jean-Michel Frank, the



Polished



The master bathroom, right, was completely renovated, but designed to look as if it could have been original to the 1930s apartment building. The white porcelain sinks are from the 1930s, but in perfect condition. The new bathtub has a border of black marble. The metal cabinets in the pantry and galley kitchen were stripped and repainted. The halophane glass lamps are Edwardian. The Viking range is 48 inches wide.



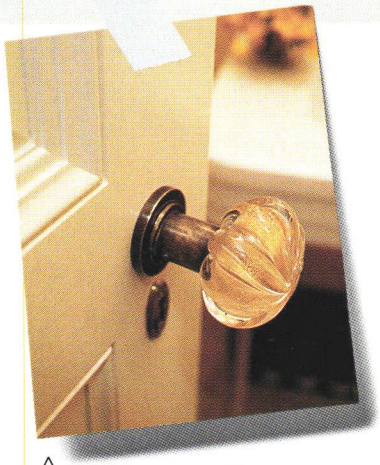
mantelpiece and mirror above it wer Johnson's "loose interpretations of things I'v seen and remembered." To keep the roor from looking stodgy, he chose pieces with "vis ible legs," rather than ones "that just sat on th floor." In the dining room, after a long debate Johnson and his clients decided to use a larg round table instead of a rectangular one. "It more intimate, and everyone can be part of th conversation," he says. "It also takes up les space in the room." The playful eighteenth century Italian sconces and the lyrical Venetia glass chandelier are elegant yet quite informal

Not cluttering up the rooms with to much furniture and holding to a monochro matic color scheme helped keep the feelin of openness and simplicity. But restraint ca have conservative undertones. "It all doe sound reactionary," admits Wanzenberg "But the obvious big statement is just to easy," adds Johnson. "We just don't do that It's very understated, right?" he asks. Yes, an very quiet. So unpretentious, in fact, that i sets the whole definition of Modernism o its ear. Who would have thought that up-to the-moment design and traditional decorat ing would ever cross paths in such a auspicious way?

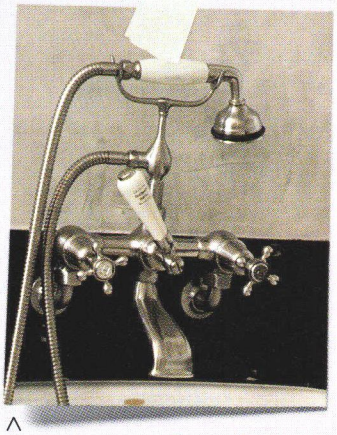


A Subtle Charm

The monochromatic living room; the formal dining room where a sparkling Venetian glass chandelier and rustling silk draperies set the tone; a master bedroom where the fabric is changed according to the seasons; an antique doorknob; a cabinet custom-made of exotic wood—all reflect the meticulous attention to detail that gives the apartment its sense of quality and timelessness and that make it all the more timely.



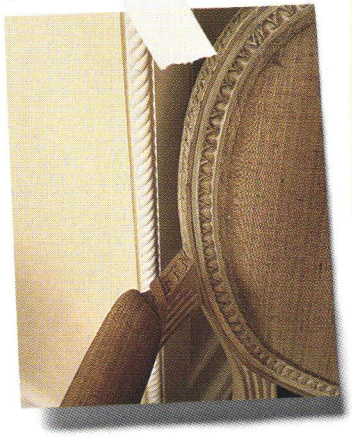
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CLASS GLASS Throughout the apartment, Venetian glass has been used to maximum effect. While the dining-room chandelier from Reymer-Jourdan, a New York antiques store, is the most spectacular example, the antique Venetian 1940s glass doorknob that has been fitted onto the door of the powder room continues the theme. Johnson discovered it in a Paris flea market, and admired its luminous quality.

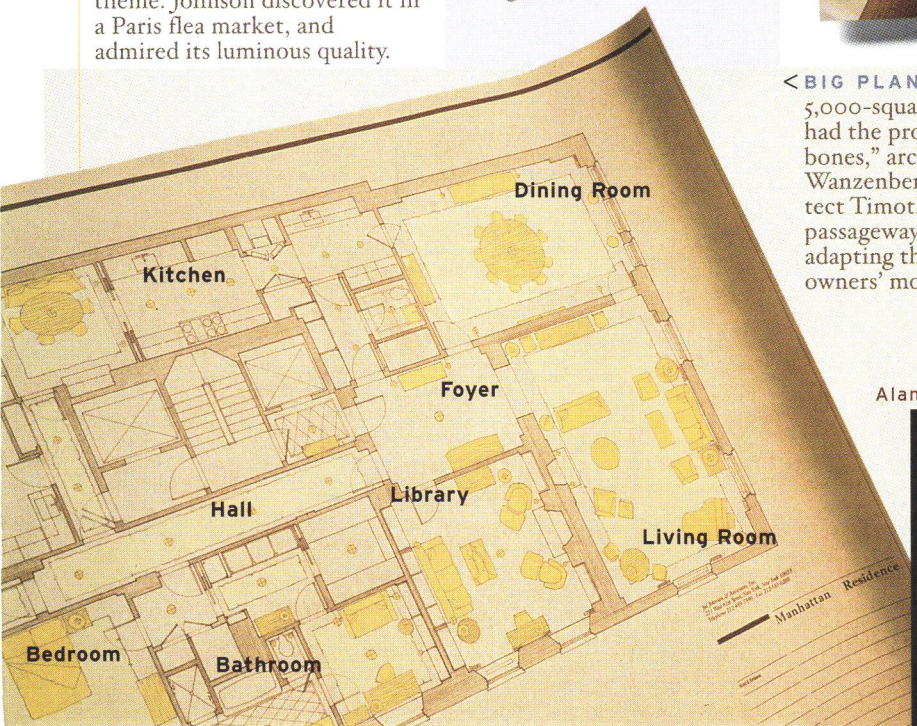


^
SOFT TOUCH Instead of shiny chrome, a brushed-nickel finish—because of its warmth and softness—was specified for the bathroom sink and bathtub fixtures. Made by Barber Wilsons Ltd., an English company, the old-fashioned looking items are available at Howard Kaplan Antiques in New York, NY, and Terra Designs, in Far Hills, NJ, among other stores.

ON THE EDGE Custom-made wood moldings in a twisted-rope pattern were installed to soften the transition between the entrance hall and the living room. Applied to the edge of the hall opening, they provide an extra layer of detailing and create a play of light and shadow. The molding was fabricated at Eisenhardt Mills Inc., in Easton, PA.

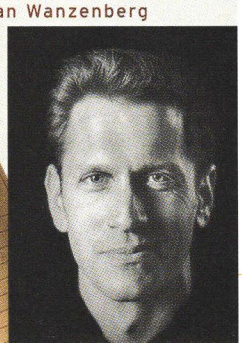
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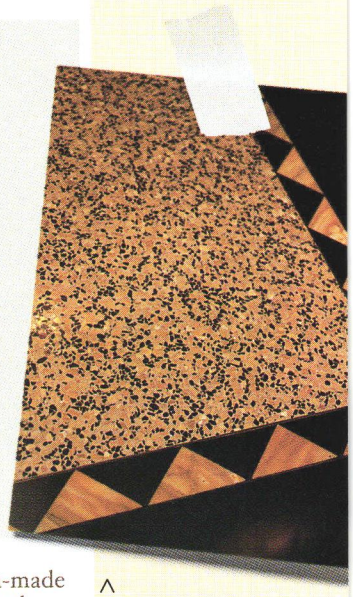




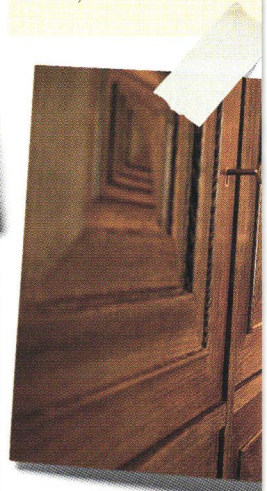
<BIG PLANS Although the 5,000-square-foot apartment had the proverbial "good bones," architect Alan Wanzenberg and project architect Timothy Joslin created new passageways and openings, adapting the layout to the new owners' more informal lifestyle.

Alan Wanzenberg

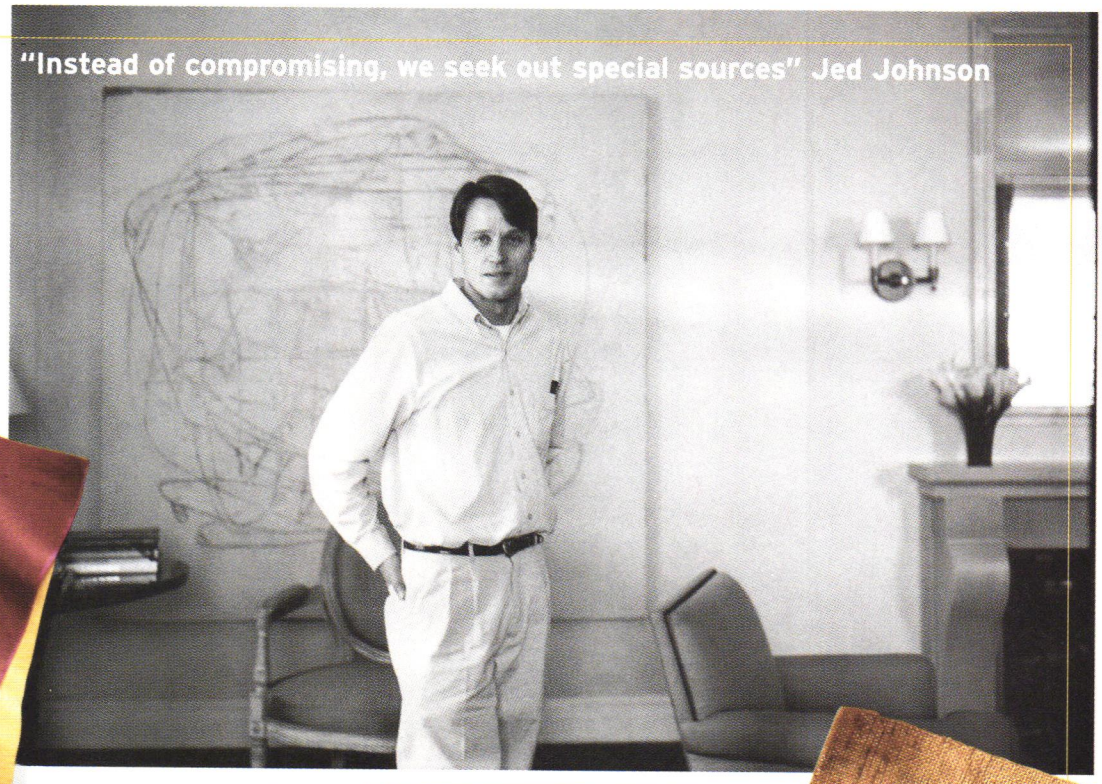


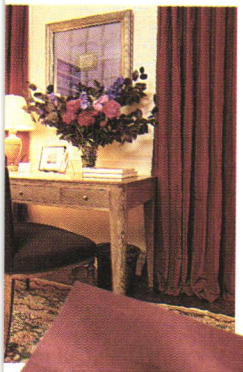


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TERRIFIC TERRAZZO keep the period feeling o vintage 1930s apartment Johnson and Wanzenber to the elevator vestibule Inspired by the original there, they duplicated it new powder room and n bathroom. Composed o with chips of polished m black, ocher, off-white, a the terrazzo was made i palette for the powder r in tones of gray, black, a for the master bathroom terrazzo can be custom- from the Port Morris Ti Marble Corporation in Bronx, New York.



^
THAT'S ENTERTAINI In the library, the televis and stereo equipment ar a custom-made cabinet wenge wood. Designed b Johnson & Associates, th has lines meant to be co mentary to the suite of I XV-style furniture, upho in weathered leather, in room. The slightly textu face of the wood adds a pattern to the room's de







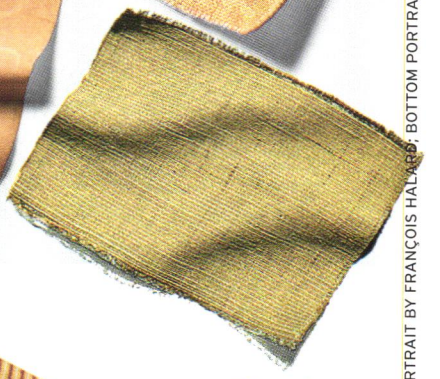
UDIED The
in the library—wine-
alamandré silk taffeta
old silk taffeta from
are in marked contrast
ture of the wool
m Bergamo that
desk chair. A tintype
h mounted on purple
New York artist
eidich hangs above
esigned by Jed
Associates.

LIVING ROOM LUXE The > suite of Louis XVI-style furniture from Jansen in Paris dates from the 1950s. It was reupholstered in a green-and-beige woven Thai silk, from Larsen, below, far right. The fabric for the draperies, right, and the slipcover on one of the sofas, above, far right, was hand-printed by Sabina Fay Braxton, a Paris-based artist. The only strong pattern in the large room is provided by the nearly wall-to-wall antique Sultanabad on the floor. A Jed Johnson & Associates–designed circular ottoman was upholstered to coordinate with the Jansen suite of furniture.

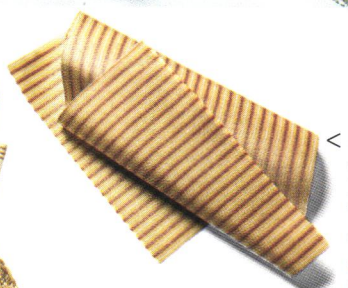












< DINING IN The soft draperies in the dining room have a light-reflecting quality They were made from Chambord taffeta, a vertically striped silk fabric from Christopher Norman Inc.



< BEDTIME STORIES The hangings on the master bedroom's canopy bed are changed depending on the season. In the winter, they match the bedcover and are made from a hand-loomed, hand-embroidered linen fabric, Vine, far left, from Chelsea Editions. In the summer, they are replaced by a sheer glazed-cotton, Lancaster, from Clarence House, also used behind the window curtains which are made of linen from Gretchen Bellinger. A cotton plaid from Schumacher, called Cassandra, was used to upholster the headboard and box spring. On the floor is a custom-made hand-loomed horsehair-and-linen carpet from James Gould, a weaver in Connecticut. More sources, see back of book.

MAP FABRIC PHOTOGRAPHS BY TOM HAYNES; INTERIORS AND TOP PORTRAIT BY FRANÇOIS HALARD; BOTTOM PORTRAIT BY DAVID SEIDNER

Center Stage

ORIGINALLY PUT UP IN 1928 AS A PRIVATE THEATER, A LONG ISLAND HOUSE NEARS THE NEW MILLENNIUM WITH A RENEWED SENSE OF DRAMA

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHEL ARNAUD

WRITTEN BY JAMES REGINATO

STYLED BY JUDYTH VAN AMRINGE







THE LIVING ROOM HAS INSPIRED SCORES OF THE SO-CALLED GREAT ROOMS THAT HAVE BECOME DE RIGUEUR IN THE HAMPTONS

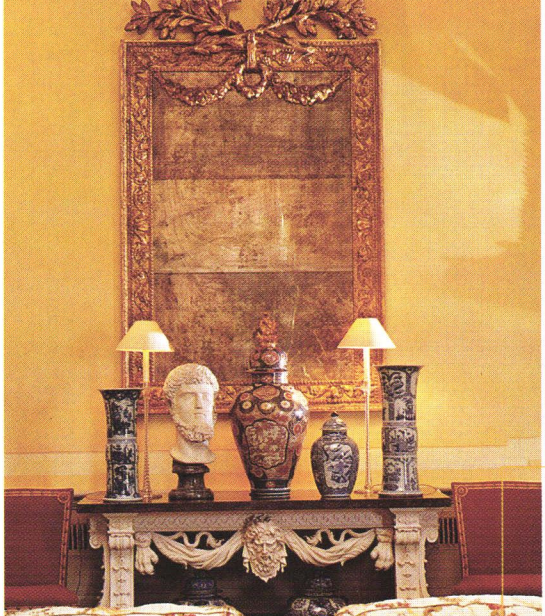
In the great room, prev
ous pages, a housekeep
prepares the bar tab
outside the dining are
A low staircase, abov
that once led to t
theater's prosceniu
now leads to two be
rooms. An antiq
Portuguese rug overli
the custom three-pie
straw carpet (wov
using 16th-centu
techniques). The chand
lier is 18th-centu
Venetian. On the so
and club chairs, right,
saffron silk-and-cott
damask from Claren
House. The side chai
are covered in 18t
century embroidered sil

"THE HOUSE HAS QUITE A HISTORY," acknowledges Maria Bockmann about Four Fountains, the Southampton estate she and her husband, Bruce, acquired four years ago. New arrivals in the area would imagine she is referring to FF's previous occupant, broadcasting titan William Paley. Old Long Island hands, however, remember the property as the longtime stronghold of decorating doyenne Eleanor Brown and her husband, Archibald Brown, the architect who designed the house. And there are yet a few stalwarts around who recall the house's original owner, a Southampton dowager named Tyng, who gave Brown the commission.

Mrs. Tyng never actually slept in what is now the Bockmann residence: she only performed there. A grande dame with a fancy for the theater, she ordered Brown to construct an auditorium across the road from her house. Various entertainments were held within, a few with Mrs. Tyng onstage, but most with her seated in the audience.

By chance, a friend of Maria Bockmann happened









One of a pair of consoles, top left, in the manner of William Kent, and a gilded mirror from an opera house in Montpellier, France. Maria Bockmann with one of florist Philip Baloun's bouquets. On the walls of the master bedroom, a Sister Parish–inspired fabric; on the bed, a mix of E. Braun & Co. and vintage European linens. Two Chinese 18th-century palace vases, right, atop a rare American 19th-century portfolio desk. The courtyard with reflecting pool is attributed to Russell Page.

WHAT 18TH-CENTURY CRAFTSMAN COULD HAVE IMAGINED THE PRECIOUS PAWS OF HIS CONSOLE RESTING UPON BEACH-INSPIRED STRAW MATTING?

to attend one of those evenings. "It was dur ing the '40s," Bockmann recounts. "My friend was only a child and Mrs. Tyng wa having a play for the war effort. My friend wa in the audience with his mother and all th other Southampton matrons, who were be decked in their jewels. Suddenly, Mrs. Tyng stood up and plucked the diamond pin from her breast and flung it into this hat. 'That' my contribution to the war effort!' she said My friend looked up and he could see hi mother visibly pale, clutching her pearls."

Following Mrs. Tyng's death, circa 1943, th theater alone was purchased by the Browns who converted it into a residence, transform ing the orchestra floor into one of Long Island's largest living rooms. A wall was erect ed where the curtain rose and fell, and th stage metamorphosed into two bedrooms.

Cut to 1978. Following a redecoration b Parish-Hadley—Mrs. Brown's great rival—Bil Paley moved into Four Fountains, along with his staggering collection of Impressionis paintings.

By the time the Bockmanns came on th scene four years ago, however, the magic wa gone. "When we first saw it, the house was shell," recalls Maria Bockmann. "It was terri bly disappointing."

While the new owners didn't alter th house structurally—"architecturally, it's no the sort of house you want to play aroun with," she says—the couple "sort of butche it up," according to Maria. "Everything wa very spindly—the cornices, the architraves Everything needed to be made bigger."

Once the proportions were right, "we jus decorated it—we didn't do much," says Maria with a fair amount of understatement.

The Bockmanns received help from profes sionals, including interior designers Derrick Parker and Peter Morris, and they worke largely with the collection of English, French and Italian art and antiques they have bee building for years, separately and together. T execute a variety of faux finishes, the coupl called in decorative painter Pierre Finkelstein

With its vast dimensions—40 feet by 4 feet, and capped by a 20-foot ceiling—th





"THERE'S A PAINTING IN THE ATTIC," SAID THE HOUSEKEEPER. I THOUGHT, "MY GOD, HE'S LEFT THE VAN GOGH!"

Bronze falcons, original denizens of the property, perch at the front entrance, above. Once the theater's lobby, the airy dining room, below, is the setting for Maria's festive weekend dinner parties. The 19th-century English Regency center table is set with Mottahedeh china in "Cornelia"; chairs are in the manner of William Kent. The lemon-filled centerpieces are from Mallett. Overhead, a 19th-century hall lantern. The dining room opens invitingly onto the front courtyard, with its drives, left and right, leading to guest cottages. Sources, see back of book.



living room has inspired scores of the so-called great rooms that have become de rigueur in the Hamptons today.

"What made the house interesting was the big room," says Bruce Bockmann, who recently retired after a twenty-five-year career with Morgan Stanley. "It's such a great place to spend the evenings. It's fabulous to be able to do everything in one room. When we have people over, more often than not they go home at one in the morning instead of eleven at night because we're able to sit around and continue a conversation without moving rooms and disrupting the atmosphere."

While the Bockmanns have one of the grandest living rooms on Long Island, there is a Southampton twist, a nod to the nearby beach. Underfoot, they have laid straw matting, a material no eighteenth-century furniture maker could have imagined beneath the precious paws of one of his pieces.

But the rug isn't quite Pottery Barn-issue. "The matting was done in exactly the same manner as it was done in England in the sixteenth century," explains Maria. "It's made out of reeds, which are cut in the summer and woven in the winter, all by hand. But you have to water it. In the winter, when the heat is on, you have to sprinkle it twice a week." So out come the watering cans.

A greener attraction of Four Fountains is its several acres of gardens, for which the Bockmanns have ambitious plans. "I've got a wonderful landscape architect, Paul Bangay," she says. "He's got great talent. We're going to create a walled garden and completely redesign the cutting garden."

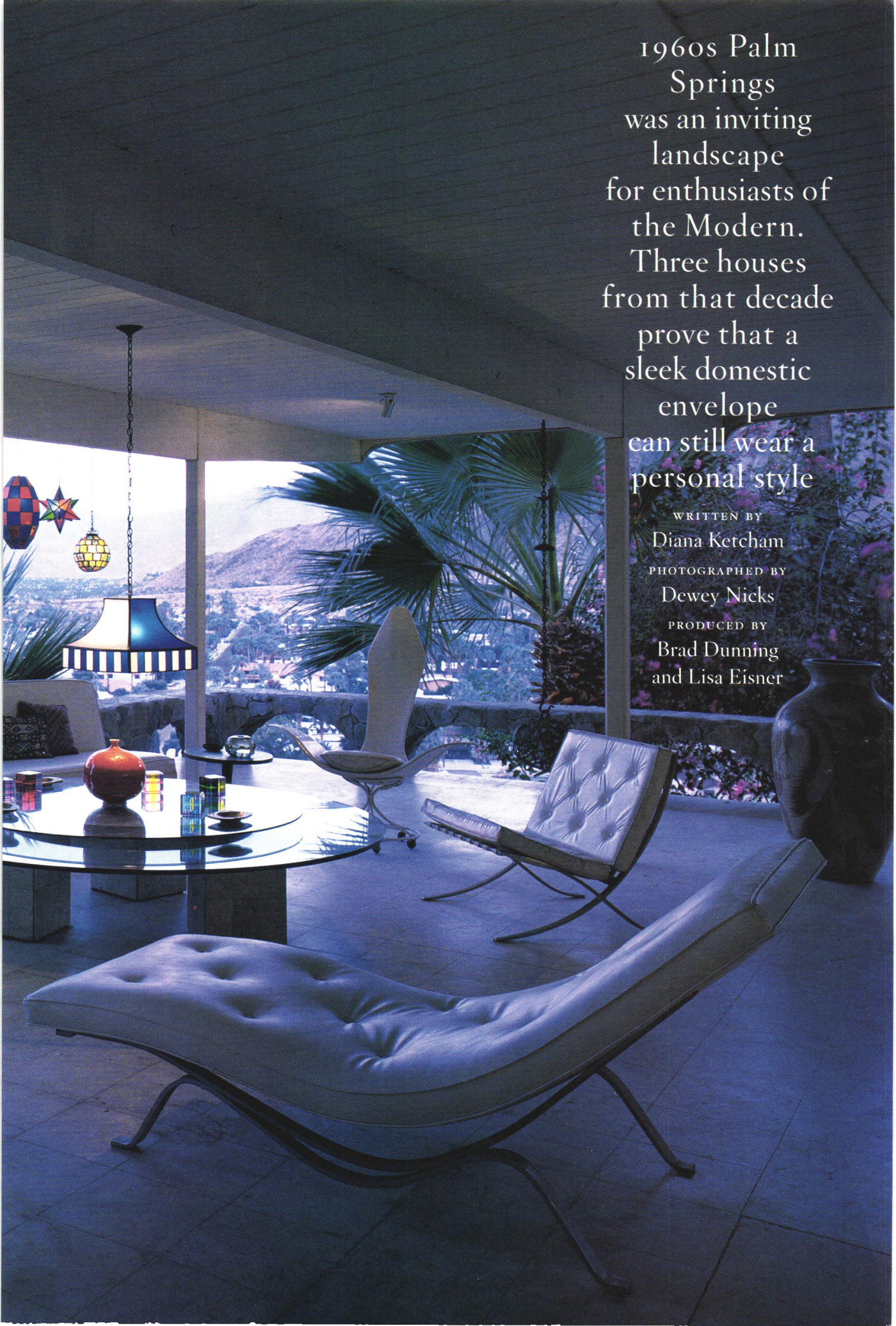
Clearly, by now the Bockmanns have made Four Fountains their own and exorcised the ghosts of its former inhabitants. Although it wouldn't be so bad to retain a bit from the past. "One day after we bought the house," says Maria, "my housekeeper was out here, cleaning upstairs. She rang me up in the city. Frantically, she said, 'Mrs. Bockmann, there's a painting in the attic!' I thought, *My God, he's* [Paley's] *left the Van Gogh*. I said, 'Describe it.' She said, 'It has very bright colors.' I said, 'It's the Van Gogh!' and I flew out there. When I arrived, she showed it to me. It was the ceiling in the attic—a mural from when the house was a theater." Needless to say, Maria Bockmann didn't really fret over the false alarm. Restored to a new, not a former, glory, Four Fountains has all the treasures it needs.



Desert

swank





1960s Palm Springs was an inviting landscape for enthusiasts of the Modern. Three houses from that decade prove that a sleek domestic envelope can still wear a personal style

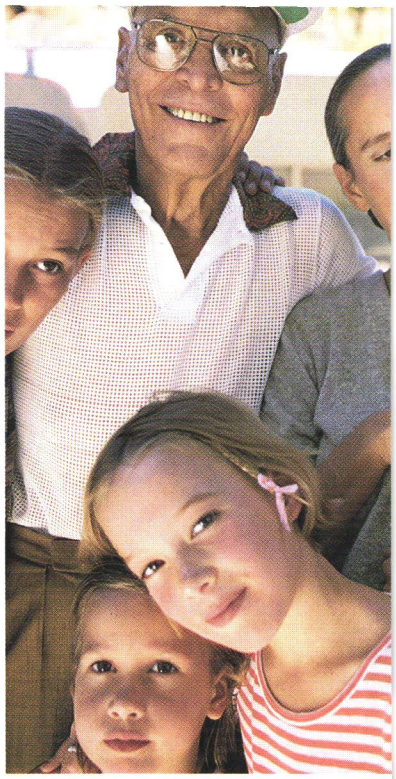
WRITTEN BY
Diana Ketcham

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
Dewey Nicks

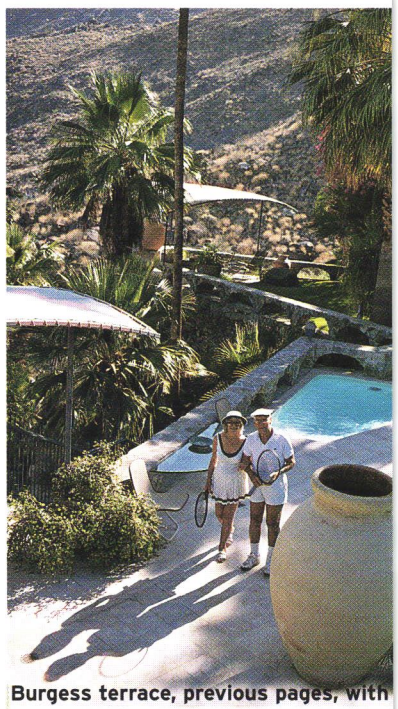
PRODUCED BY
Brad Dunning
and Lisa Eisner

There are two schools of thought about building in the desert. One says to use the earth's natural protection against sun and cold, sheltering underground or behind heavy walls. The other says pitch a tent. The twentieth-century alternative to the tent is to build elegantly in glass and metal, as if mocking the harshness of the climate. Palm Springs is one of the places where you find attempts at desert High Modernism, the impulse to take a Mies van der Rohe glass house and set it down in the sagebrush. Like the Hollywood that created Palm Springs as its colony, the town has a tradition of avant-garde architecture, exemplified by Richard Neutra's legendary Kaufmann House, the California cousin of Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater. A subtext to the dominant taste for Spanish revival and period kitsch, Palm Spring's modernist heritage is now being reappreciated, particularly by the generation that came of age in the '50s and '60s.

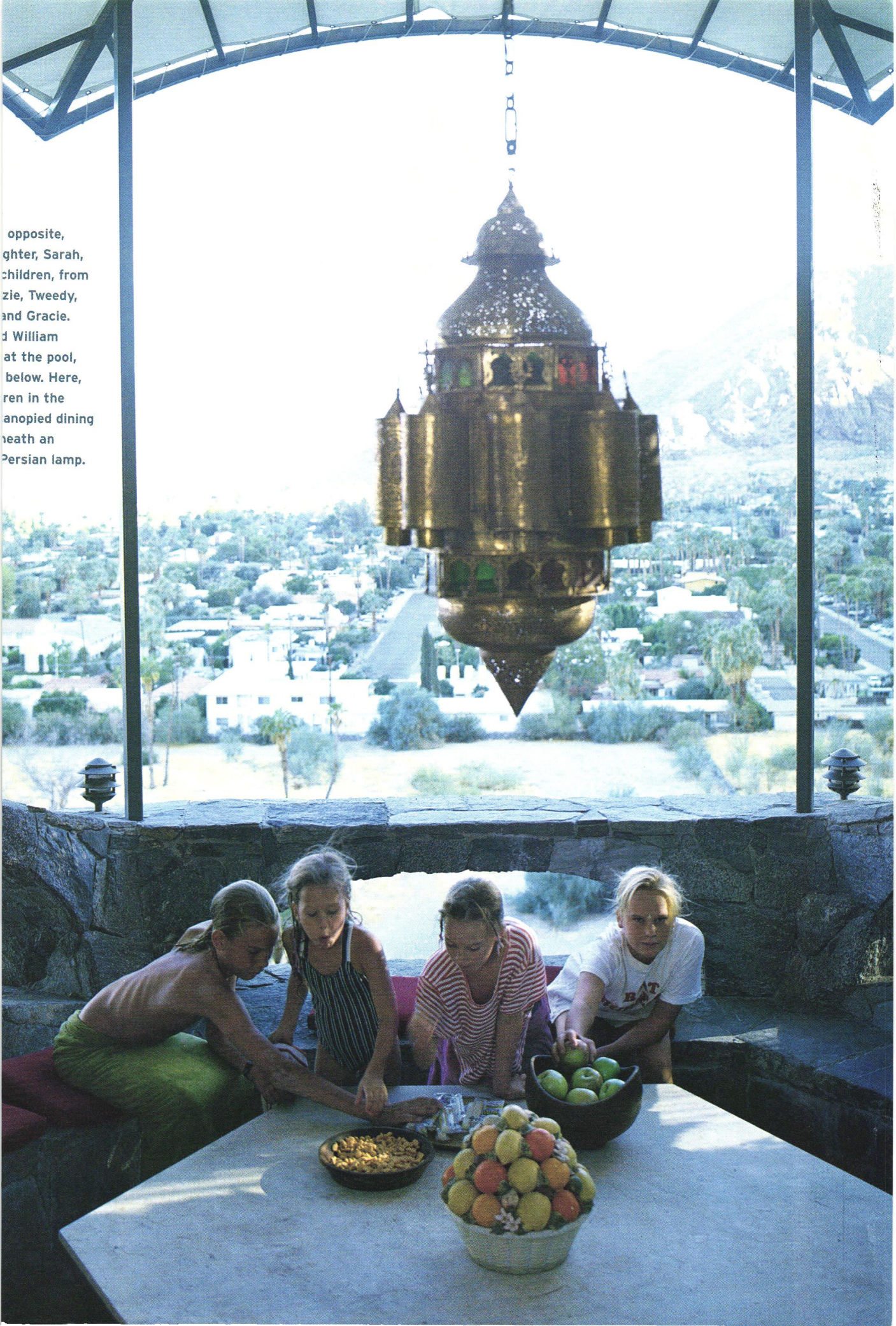
For them, ninety-three-year-old architect Albert Frey is a hero. Looking up at Mount San Jacinto from the town of Palm Springs, only four houses are visible on the entire mountainside. Two are glass houses, built in the '60s. One is the home of



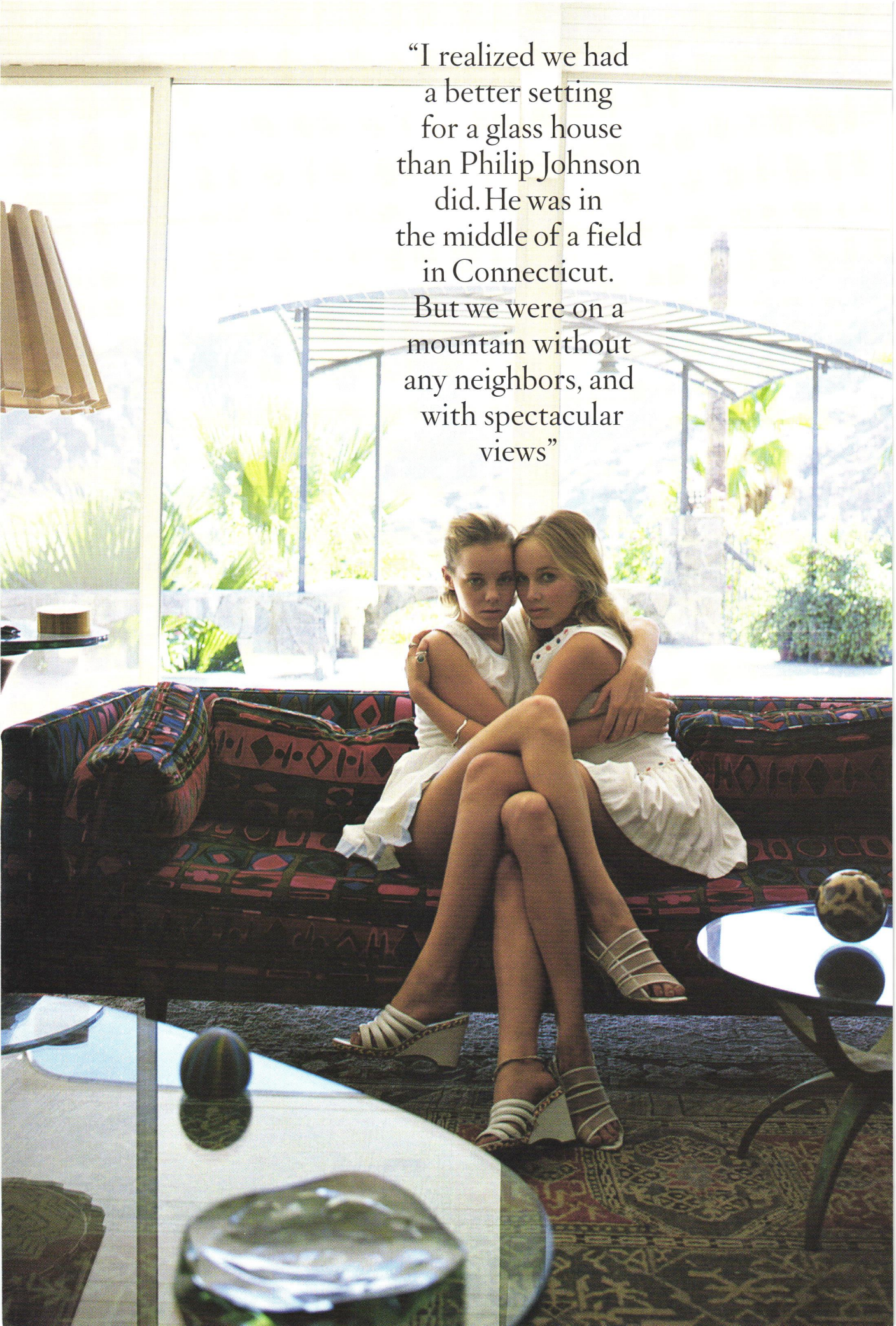




Burgess terrace, previous pages, with its array of dangling, dazzling things—ceramic hangings by Carlton Ball, glass table by William Burgess, oversiz glazed pots, and glass ornaments—is anchored by a modernist standby, the white leather Mies van der Rohe chair, top right. Two Eames chairs, left, provi a familiar touch, next to a large pot by Henry Takemoto, a ceramic deer by Gamboni, and a sofa by Burgess, with fabric by Jack Lenor Larsen.



opposite,
ghter, Sarah,
children, from
zie, Tweedy,
and Gracie.
d William
at the pool,
below. Here,
ren in the
anopied dining
neath an
Persian lamp.


"I realized we had
a better setting
for a glass house
than Philip Johnson
did. He was in
the middle of a field
in Connecticut.
But we were on a
mountain without
any neighbors, and
with spectacular
views"

house is blessed with several living
as, all outdoors except for this
, opposite, and all relaxed enough for
ldren. The Burgesses's granddaughter
ily, right, and her friend, Bijou Phillips,
right in. The glass-topped table
y Noguchi. Bedspread, below, by
k Lenor Larsen.

y, a Swiss-born apprentice of Le
busier and an unrepentant mod-
ist. With its slanted metal roof and
s walls, the tiny pavilion looks like a
busian spacecraft come down from
sky. In fact, the house is built
und the granite, on a shelf blasted
of a boulder, part of which obtrudes
Frey's living room. Nothing softens
collision of modern materials with
mountainside.

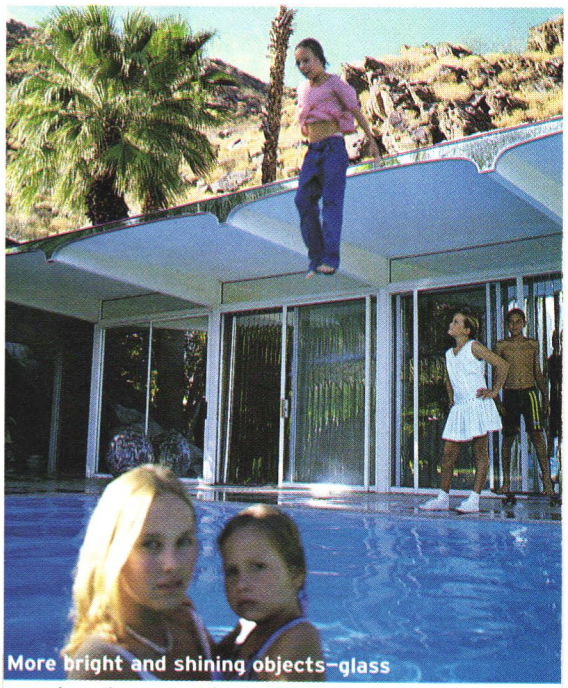
When Frey built his bachelor retreat
964, his was the highest house in the
ey. He has lived in Palm Springs since 1934, when he came out from New York on a job and fell under the spell of the desert. In the decades since, he has put his stamp on civic Palm Springs. He designed its streamlined city hall, as well as schools, hospitals, churches, a supermarket, yacht club. His gas station at the entrance to town is beloved by connoisseurs of '50s roadside buildings. His houses are woven unobtrusively into the fabric of the neighborhoods, recognizable by their refinement of proportion and use of corrugated metal, often painted in his trademark color, sage green.

"I spent twenty-five years looking up at this mountain," says Frey, adding that the rocky setting evoked boyhood memories of Switzerland. "I always thought that I wanted to be up here with the



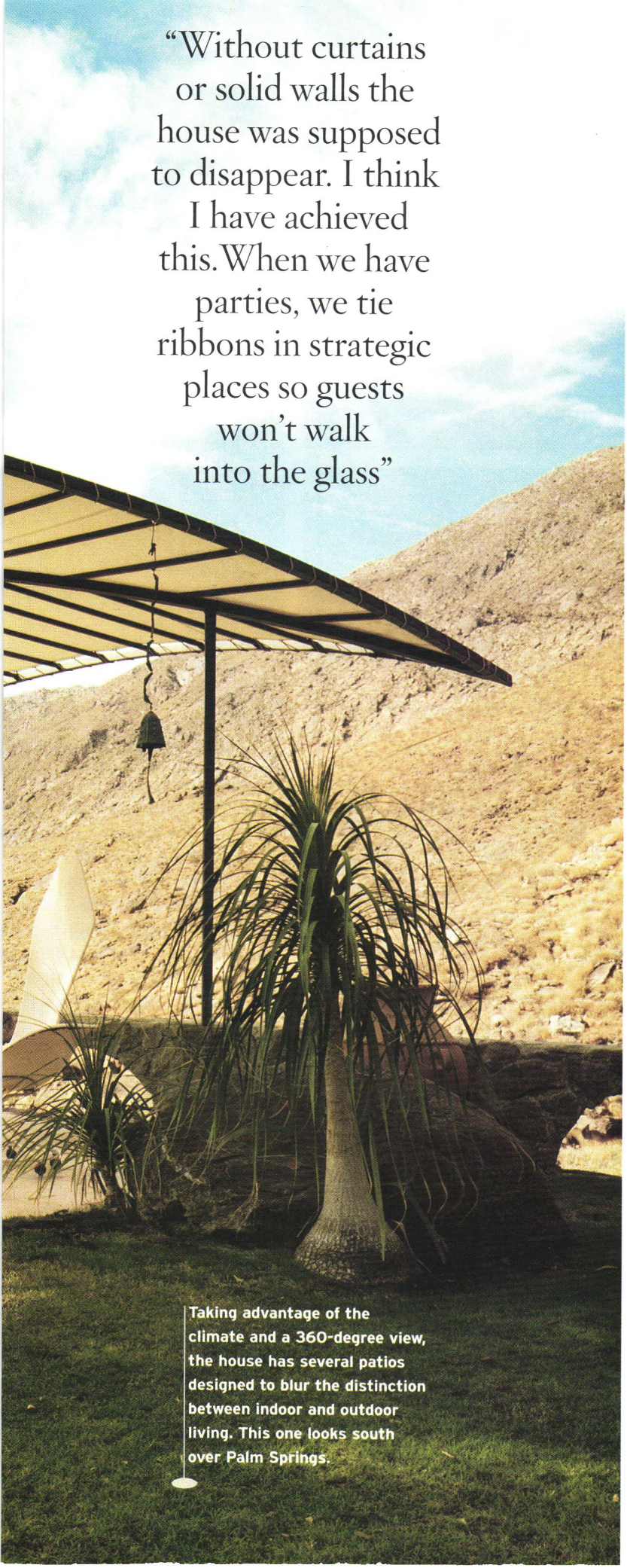






More bright and shining objects—glass newel-post ornaments, top, restyled as door handles, Finnish Ryijy rugs; glass table with inlaid-turquoise base by Mendoza, Warren Platner chairs from Knoll; for the Burgess grandchildren, the best way into the pool is a flying leap from the roof overhang.





"Without curtains or solid walls the house was supposed to disappear. I think I have achieved this. When we have parties, we tie ribbons in strategic places so guests won't walk into the glass"

Taking advantage of the climate and a 360-degree view, the house has several patios designed to blur the distinction between indoor and outdoor living. This one looks south over Palm Springs.

eagles." These days, visitors make their way up to Frey's eagle's nest to meet the man who worked with Le Corbusier. The young Frey helped design some of the legendary buildings of the Modern movement, including Corbu's Villa Savoye and the original Museum of Modern Art in New York. His work was presented to the public by Philip Johnson in the historic 1932 "International Style" exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art. An elfin presence with spiky silver hair and white jumpsuit, Frey takes the long view of the post-modern taste for ornament. "These style revivals always come back," he says mildly. "Each generation needs to rebel against its teachers."

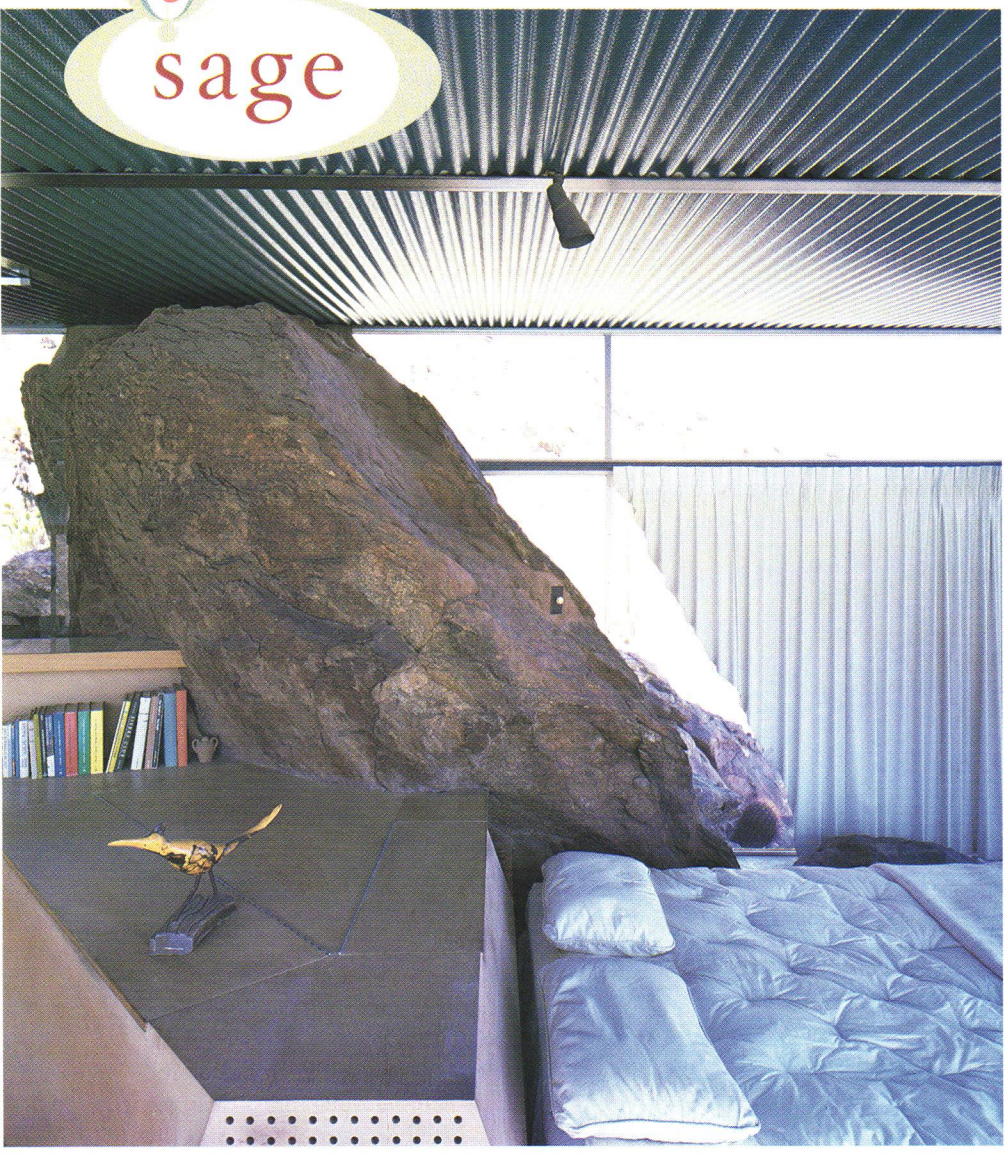
Frey is a guru who doesn't preach. His belief in a timeless ideal, Modernism's truth of function and materials, is evident in every aspect of the design of his house. Its built-in couch is also a storage unit and the dining area doubles as a drafting table. The steel frame of the simple pavilion is exposed, with a pre-Gehry display of corrugated metal on the inside. Visitors are invited to examine the shade studies Frey made when he first came to the desert. These are the key to the overhangs that make this exposed mountainside dwelling livable in the summer sun. Like most ideals, the glass pavilion has been humanized slightly. Frey had to put in curtains.

The nearest neighbor is a glass house from roughly the same period. But Bougain Villa, the playful name of William and Clara Burgess's hillside house, is a spiritual universe away from Frey's machine for living. Approaching from town, the impression is of Mediterranean luxury. A stone wall ripples with rows of classical arches, crowned by a burst of palms and violet bougainvillea. Inside is an oasis of palm trees, lawns, waterfalls, and pools of Japanese fish. Everywhere is the dazzle of reflecting surfaces: mirrors, colored glass, Italian marble, brass hanging lamps, glazed ceramic pots. From the parapet over the main entrance you seem to have a 360-degree view of the desert, an optical illusion aided by strategically placed mirrors.

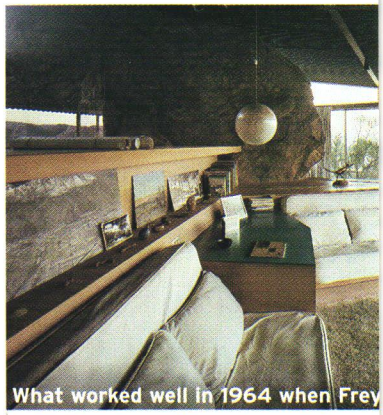
It is hard to tell where the terrace and garden end and the house itself

Desert sage





begins. This is precisely the point of environment that William Burgess created. "We hardly regard it a house," says the owner, the reti founder of a Los Angeles electro firm. Although he studied the Angeles houses of Neutra and Wri Burgess was most influenced by Ph Johnson's Glass House. "I realized we had a better setting for a g house than Philip Johnson did," says. "He was in the middle of a fiel



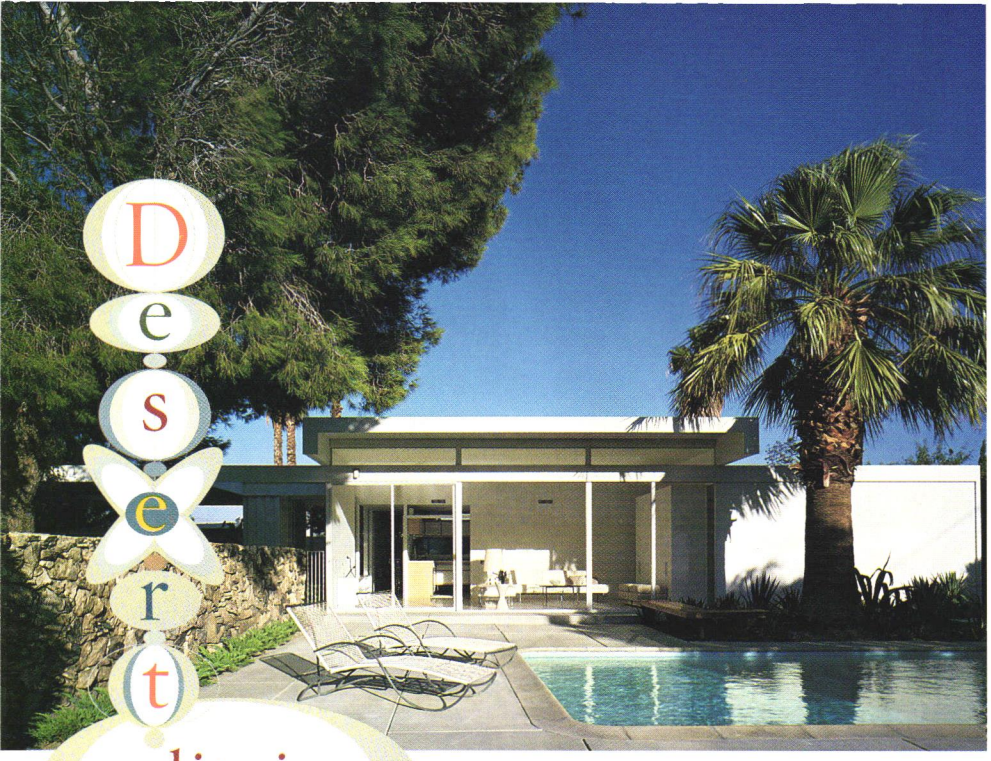
What worked well in 1964 when Frey built his place still works well in 1996. Only 1,200 square feet, the house, top left, makes no concessior to the boulder it wraps around, and the boulder, left, makes none to it. Frey likes it that way. The built-in living room furniture, above, doesn't allow for a dweller's change of heart or style and Frey has had neither. Opposite: Yoga makes this paragon of Modernism flexible at 93.

Connecticut. We were on a mount with no neighbors and a spectacular vi

In the '50s, the young Burgess fa often camped in the desert. When t heard that prison laborers had bui road up into the wild Palm Spri Palisades, they bought land there shelf was dynamited out of the gra big enough for a 1,500-square-f cabana with one bedroom and a kitchen. As at Albert Frey's, piece the granite hillside were incorpora into the house.

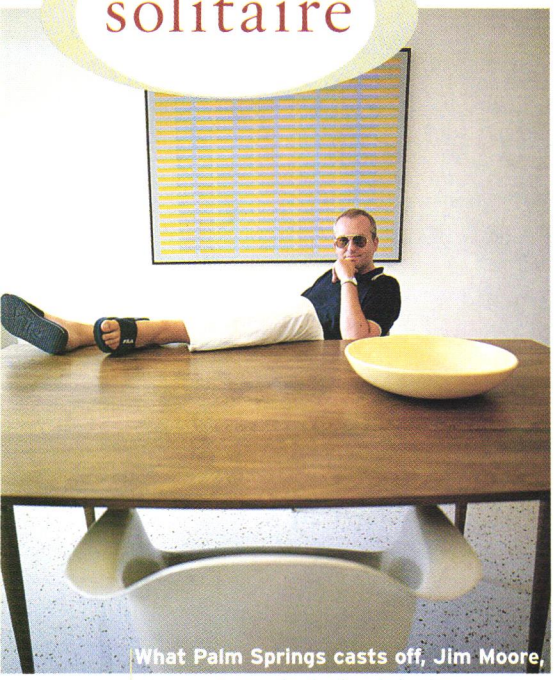
Burgess built what he conside "the simplest structure," with an ei foot-wall module, a flat roof, and ext or walls of glass or mirror. "With





Desert solitaire

"When I saw my house, I knew it. It wasn't even for sale. I told the agent to stop the car and go ring the doorbell"

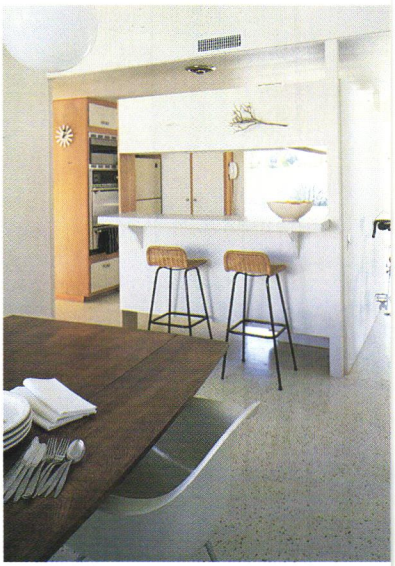


What Palm Springs casts off, Jim Moore, above, adopts, including this demonstration house, top, built in 1963. Thrift-store items such as the painting and table in the dining room acquire their panache from keeping company with an Eames chair. The same trick is performed by the George Nelson clock, above right, which gives the two flea-market stools below it their touch of class.

curtains or solid walls the house was supposed to disappear," he says. "I think I have achieved this. In the evening, the indoor light is dim to balance the outdoor lighting. When we have parties, we tie ribbons in strategic places so that the guests won't walk into the glass."

The original house was subsequently enlarged to 3,000 square feet and an adjoining guesthouse built with the help of their neighbor Albert Frey. In the meantime, the Burgesses retired to Palm Springs, where their daughter Sarah was living nearby. Now their oasis is the favorite gathering place for six grandchildren, aged sixteen to two.

Burgess is an art collector who has been interested in paintings and drawings. Having decided to build a transparent house, however, he had to change the nature of his collecting. "Since all the surfaces were mirror or glass, there were no walls for paintings," he says. "Any decoration had to be standing or hanging." The family was already acquiring furniture by Saarinen, Eames, and Noguchi. "We began collecting hanging lamps wherever we traveled. Then there are the large pots." Burgess jokes about how he had become the world's most important and possibly only patron of ceramicists who specialize in large pots. In their Palm Springs environment, the Burgesses have interpreted the California Modern ideal of indoor-outdoor living in a highly individual manner.



Yet, with its exuberant exotica, m
rors, Mediterranean hanging lam
and colored glass, it can be seen as a v
sion of the newly fashionable '60s "r
hippie" aesthetic, albeit a very eleg
one. Burgess resists the idea that he l
created a period piece. "I prefer
think of it as the aesthetic response t
particular setting."

For Jim Moore, on the other hanc
'60s period piece was exactly what
was looking for. The fashion direc
for a New York magazine, Moore gr
up in St. Paul, Minnesota, in the '
and '60s. "We had an ordinary ho
my parents had filled with antiques,"
says. "But my best friend had a ho
that was modern and 'cool.' There wa
tree growing through the roof of t
living room and a couch that wrapp
around the tree." Of his first visit
Palm Springs seven years ago, he sa
"I thought I was in a time capsule
was my fantasy of mid-century Mod
come true."

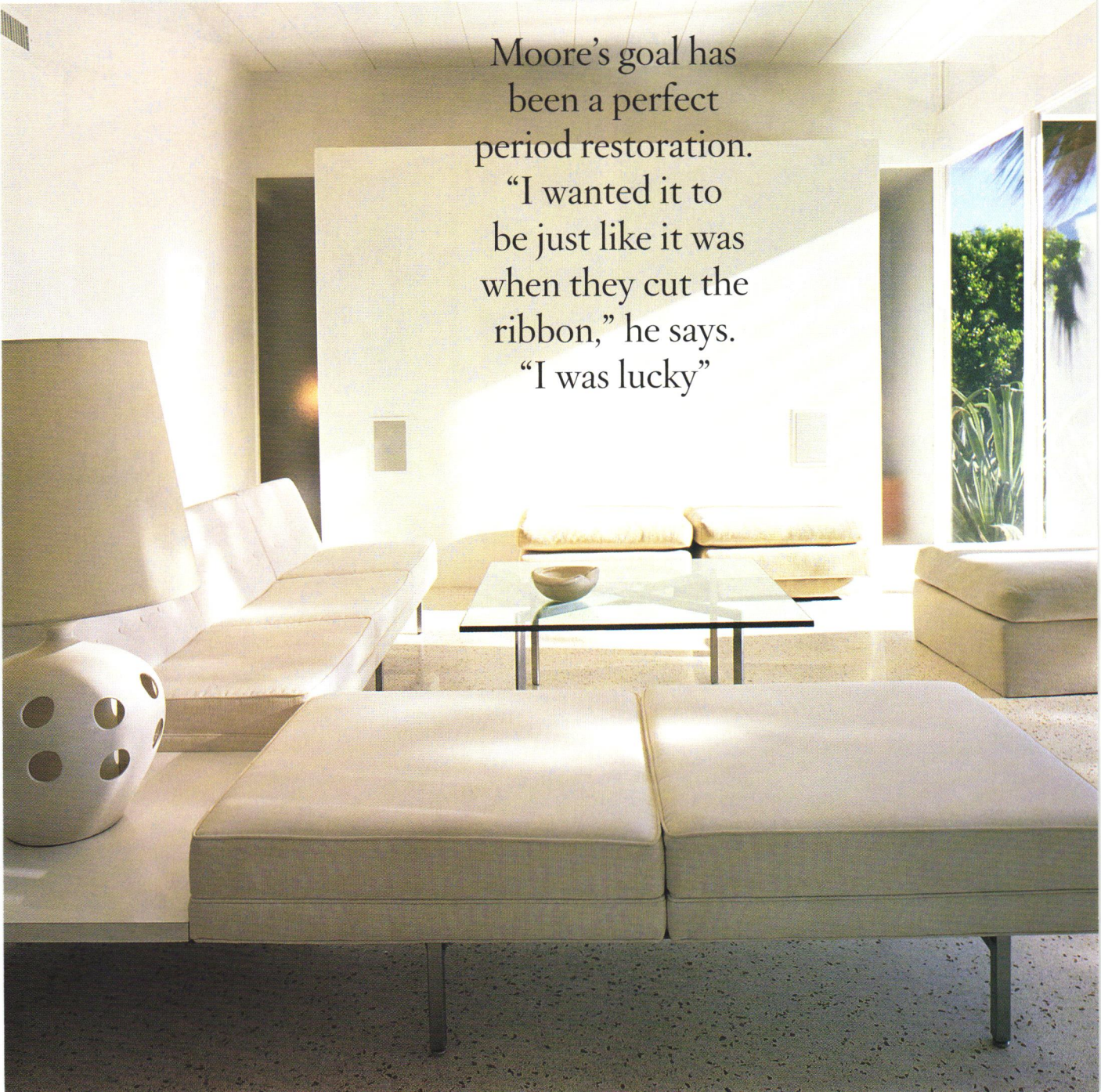


ght the purple
the hills in
t is reflected in
ss doors behind
l. The opulent
not lost on the
n chairs pur-
at a thrift store
dollars.

Moore began spending his vacations in Palm Springs and eventually decided to buy a house. The glass house he found is worlds away from the hillside retreats of Frey and Burgess: it is a spec house on the wrong side of town. Moore's part of North Palm Springs is the site of the racquet club that Ralph Bellamy once owned and contains a few Neutra houses. But his own street is decidedly run-down. "When I saw my house, I knew it," Moore says. "It wasn't even for sale. I told the agent to stop the car and go ring the doorbell."

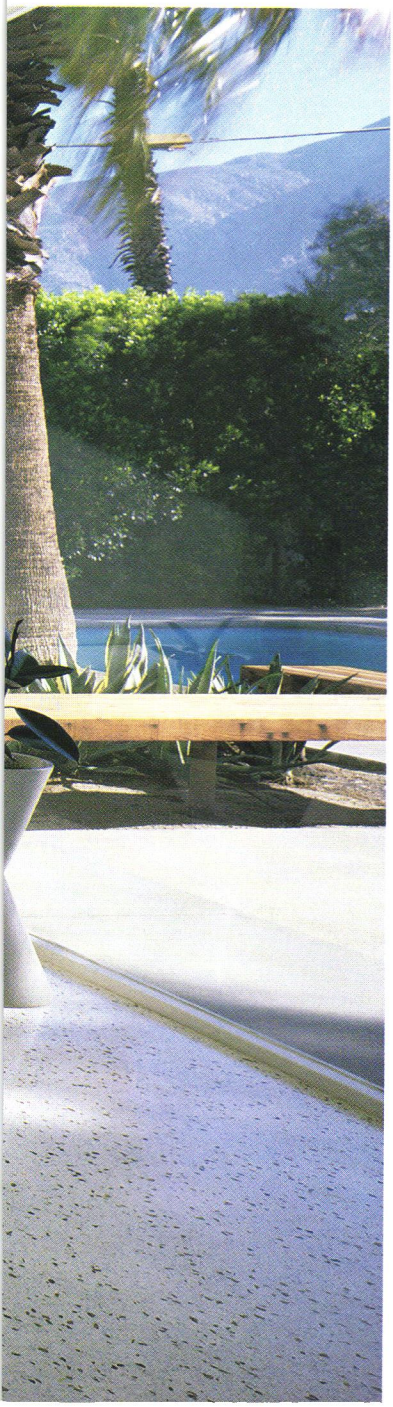
What Moore saw from his car were the crisp lines of a demonstration house for a development sponsored by U.S. Steel Corporation. The prefabricated three-bedroom house, designed by Palm Springs architect Donald Wexler, is made entirely of steel, including steel-panel interior walls and a steel roof. Its preassembled kitchen and bath core is set inside of a basic square plan, with a living and dining room on one side, a row of bedrooms on the other, a patio running around the house, a small pool, and a carport. It cost $14,000 in 1963.

Moore's goal has been a perfect period restoration. "I wanted it to be just like it was when they cut the ribbo he says. "I was lucky." He discove the intact carport under the garage a terrazzo under the shag carpet. Find the appropriate period furniture v easy for the owner, a connoisseur thrift shops. "Palm Springs has the b thrift-store shopping in the world," says. "Oceans of '60s items, in perf condition." Moore represents the g eration of film and fashion peo who have recently rediscovered Pa Springs. They regard it as a trove well-preserved '50s and '60s desig phenomenon attributable to the

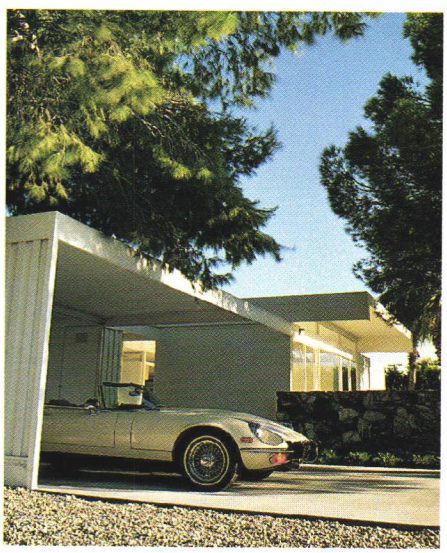


mate, the recession, and the town's mographics. "Things don't rot here," oore explains. "When Modern went t of style, instead of renovating, rich ople just moved on. Their things ded up in secondhand stores." Like e couple now restoring Neutra's clas- Kaufmann House, Moore delights in e vestiges of the Modern that have rvived in Palm Springs.

Meanwhile, Spanish revival is the wn's officially sanctioned style. But rhaps there is a contradiction in the tion that Palm Springs should have official architecture. Founded by







Moore's house is like a car without wheels that has been moved straight from the assembly line to join the steel carport, near left. The living room, far left, takes its shape from the clues provided by a coffee table from Knoll and sofa from Bill Reed. And yet, as in the bedroom, above, the illusion of mass production is the creation of an invisible and selective hand. Sources, back of book.

sophisticated nonconformists in flight from Los Angeles and New York, the community's most authentic tradition is individual expression. Frey, Burgess, and Moore each have different reasons for preferring the Modern. For Moore, it has the glamour of being back in vogue. For old-timers such as Frey and Burgess, it never went out of style.

Diana Ketcham *is a San Francisco–based architecture critic and the author of* Le Désert de Retz *(MIT Press).*



THE COUNTRY SIDE of LIFE



A clear vision and a talent for organization
shaped the house that
Peri Wolfman and Charles Gold built

WRITTEN BY SUZANNE SLESIN

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANITA CALERO





YEARS AGO, WHEN I
WOLFMAN WAS A LITTLE GIRL AND HER FRIE
WERE LEAVING THEIR CLOTHES IN CLUMPS ON
FLOOR AND THEIR CHEWING-GUM WRAPP
UNDER THE BED, SHE WAS FOLDING HER T-SH
AND STACKING THEM NEATLY ON THE CHAIR IN
ROOM. NO WONDER SHE GREW UP TO SEE
world around her—and everything in it, from a collec
of white pitchers to the placement of a swimr
pool—as visual elements to be organized into
composed tableaux.

"I was always neat and artistic, two things that
necessarily go together," says the New York City ret
who is known for the pristinely perfect SoHo s
Wolfman-Gold & Good Company. She owns it
Charles Gold, a photographer, who is her partner in li
well as in business. "Shopkeeping suits me better thar
more creative forms of art," Wolfman explains. "The
something orderly about it." Gold adds a practical r
"For me the most important part of order is maintena
It's easy to put things in order—putting them back all the time is another matter. But I do it." The couple's talent for organization is not limited to the wares they sell. Rather, it permeates every facet of their life. So, of course, the country house they just completed—and share with Wolfman's sister Laurie Wax—on eastern Long Island is the epitome of orderliness.

Inside the front is a well-ordered room, previous p At the foot of th stairs, above, ma zines and file fo are stashed und old farm table. T dining area, left, between the kit and the living ro Overscaled sofa easy chairs, right comfortable sea The small zinc-l table was a dry

"I had a clear vision from the beginning," Wolfman says of the 3,500-square-foot shingled house that looks as if it has just jumped off the pages of a child's coloring book. "I wanted a house that was somewhat Shake not an imitation of anything." She collaborated with I Bogdanow, an architect whose New York firm has desi restaurants, retail stores, hotel lobbies, as well as nume houses. The house began with a detailed drawin Wolfman. "It had to be very linear, and very, very sim she says, adding that she required places to hang coat leave boots at both the front and kitchen doors; a scre porch; and a terrace that extended from the living r and dining room. "I wanted to be able to walk straight like they do in Europe," Wolfman says. "An American f house is several steps up from the land." *(Continued on pa*


Geoffrey Beene
Brenda Cullerton
Abrams





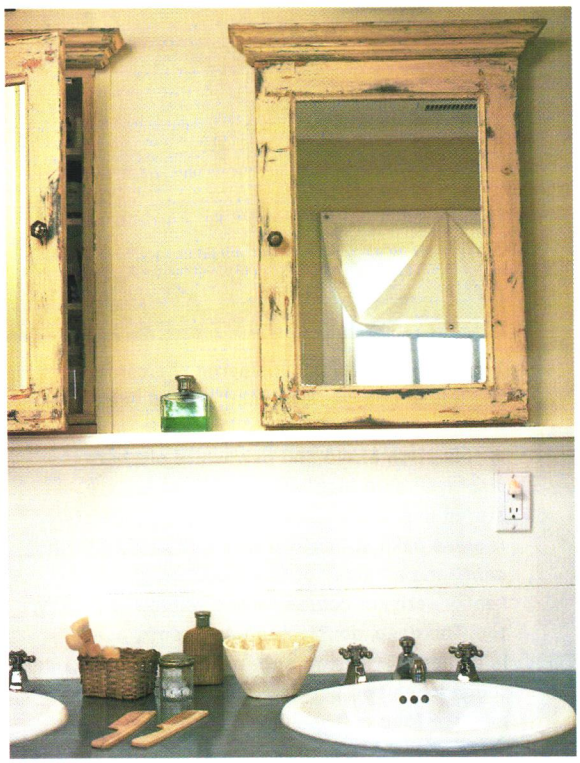






The kitchen, left, is considered the center of the house and was designed around the antique French marble-topped baker's table. A collection of old and new white pitchers is displayed on a high shelf. Wineglasses are stored upside down on racks, restaurant-style. A glass cake stand, two white enamel watering cans, and an array of bowls and crocks are kept—neatly, of course—in the windowed pantry, top. The deep, double soapstone sink, above, is equipped with two sets of faucets, a practical touch when two people who both like to cook prepare food at the same time.

"BECAUSE most of the pieces have a finish o faded old paint, they live comfortably togethe



Having dropped the kitchen ceiling two feet lower ("cozy fa house height") than the adjoining ten-foot-high ceiling in the li room ("for the feeling of a spacious room but not the sense of a cavernous house"), she called on Bogdanow to sort out the diffe levels upstairs. "He made it all happen," says Wolfman, who co from the hand-waving school of architecture.

This is house building that starts with such basic concern designing the kitchen around a big, antique French marble-top baker's table. So, along came the white Carrara marble countertops, the walk-in pantry with its screen door, the deep soapstone sink with two sets of faucets—not just one in the middle—and the heavy-duty range with its hood that disappears, Italian-style, into the wall. And, of course, a shelf for a row of white pitchers and a rack for glasses and picture-perfect stacks of plates. "I just can't relax until everything is tidy and in its place," says Wolfman, who started buying and collecting furniture even before the foundation of the house was laid. "Because most of the pieces have a finish of faded paint, they live comfortably together," says Wolfman, who confined her color choices to nicely textured

A guest bedroom above, is furnishe with an antique iron bed. Lamps b David Long are m from kitchen imp ments. In the bat room, left, the wh canvas curtain fi with grommets is reflected in the m cine cabinet. The in the master bed room, right, was by Lewis Krevolin from old architect elements.

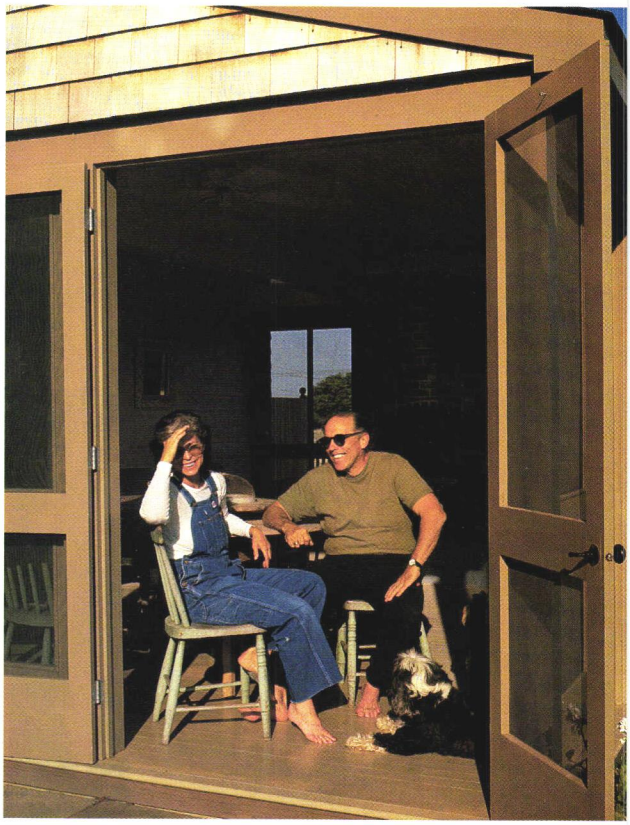


THE ONLY permissible red touch in the Wolfman-G
point of the nearly surreal view of the Kansas-like o



verse is the red barn, a local landmark that is the focal
, and a landscape that stretches to the horizon

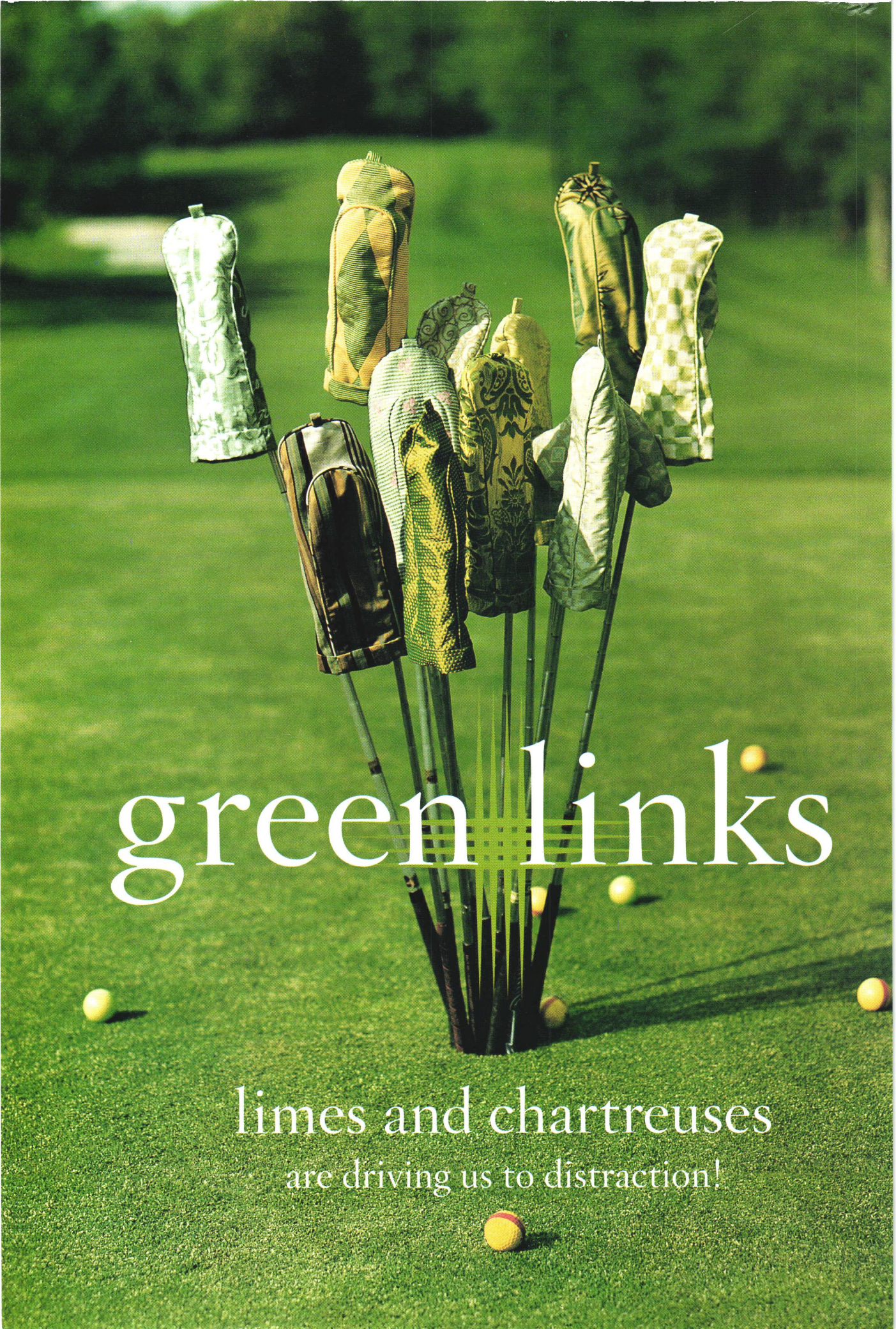




Peri Wolfman, Charles Gold, and Daisy, a Tibetan terrier in the screened porch. An old farm gate, left, defines the edge of the property and cuts across the dramatic vista of the fields beyond. Sources, see back of book.

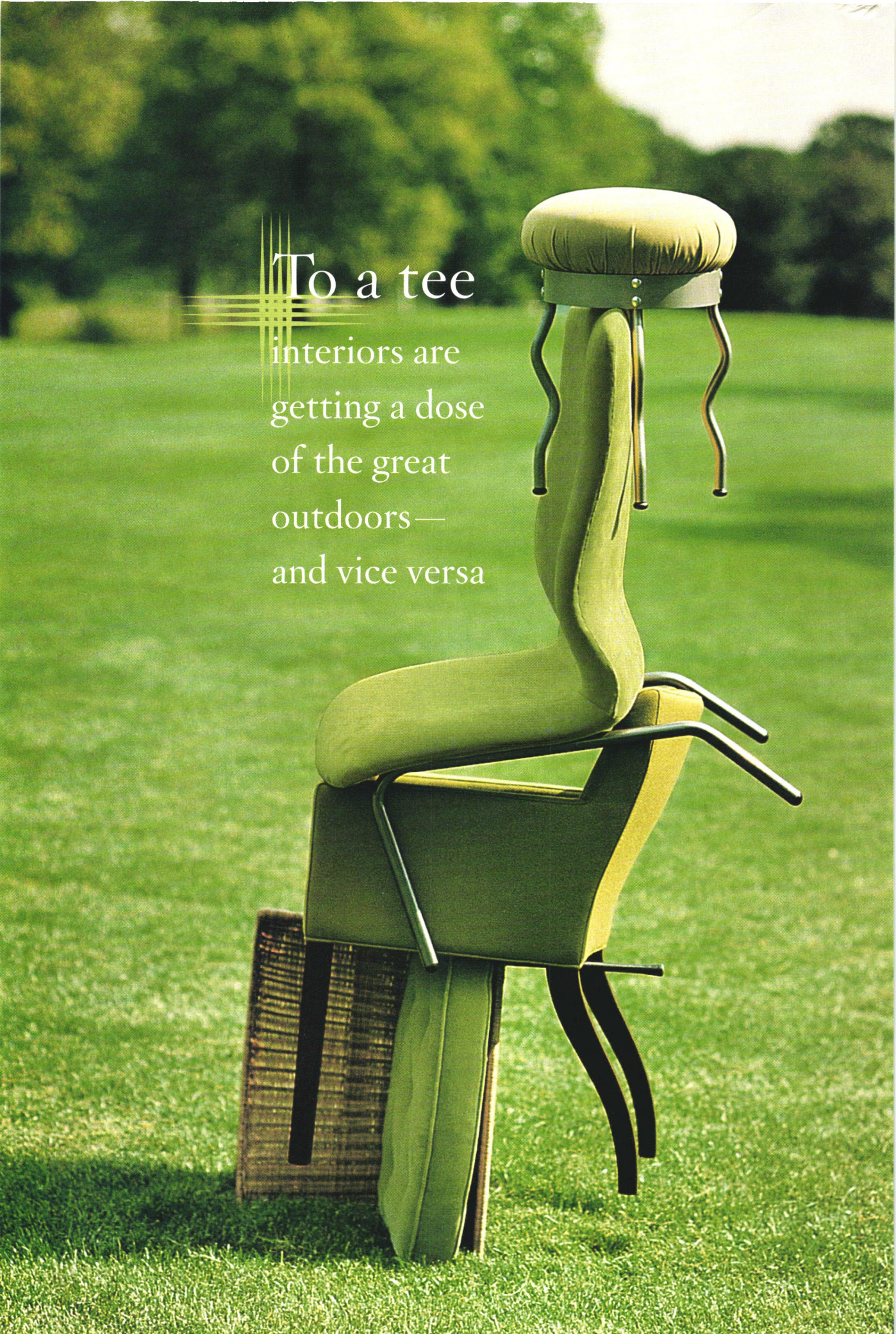
pale greens, blues, and grays. "I just eliminated all the reds. It's a very clear vision. I collect in categories—white ironstone, green toy trucks, cast-iron dog doorstops. My head doesn't get turned. I do appreciate other things, but I know what suits me. I want to grow and change, but you won't find red lacquer screens around here."

The only permissible red touch in the Wolfman-Gold universe is the old barn, once used as an airplane hangar, a local landmark that is the focal point of the nearly surreal view of the Kansas-like open sky and a landscape that stretches to the horizon. Lisa Stamm and Dale Booher, Shelter Island, New York–based landscape designers, not only drew the crucial lot plan, siting the house and the swimming pool, but found the suitably rough-hewn farm gate that now separates the property with its oh-so-green lawn from the fields beyond. "The gate gave us the impression we actually had the South Forty," says Wolfman, "and that if we just opened it up it was all ours."


green links
limes and chartreuses
are driving us to distraction!



PHOTOGRAPHED BY FRANÇOIS DECONINCK
PRODUCED BY RORY GEVIS


To a tee
interiors are
getting a dose
of the great
outdoors—
and vice versa







Cover Ups

These new fabrics will put the swing back in your life.

(PREVIOUS PAGES)
CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:
Calico Corners,
Zimmer + Rohde,
Christopher Hyland, Inc.,
Brunschwig & Fils,
Christopher Hyland, Inc.,
Anna French,
Donghia Textiles,
Schumacher,
Rose Cumming, Inc.,
Manuel Canovas,
Clarence House, and
Pollack & Associates.

Caddy Shack

Tassels from Houlès wrap up your stash. Among some of your treasures: Aero Ltd, Fortuny silk bolster and Enzo Artifacts Inc., rug. You might need to add a U-Haul for all the great green stuff out there.

Sand Wedge

With upholstery that is supple and soft, these chairs are meant to be stroked as well as sat upon.

OPPOSITE FROM TOP:
Uri stool from Ikea,
Roscoe chair by
Zuckerman/Lawton,
Kipling chair from Keilhauer,
3/4 chair by G design.

Fore...

Watch out—the coolest way to enjoy the new green is in PVC and Pucci.

THIS PAGE:
Vase by Zani & Zani,
towel Emilio Pucci.

Sand Trap

Lighten up,
there is a way out:
Donghia's Murano glass lamps
and Karastan's Aspen rug.

On the Fairway

Your friends will be green with envy when they see your new acquisitions.
She Chair from Palazzetti,
Lamp by Vistosi,
Chenille rug by Import Specialists.

Chip Shot

With china as appealing as this, even yesterday's leftovers will look fresh.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: service plate Le Voyage de Marco Pol by Versace for Rosenthal USA; presentation plate Benrues by Jean Louis Coquet; Bougainvillea cup, saucer and dinner plate from Raynaud & Co.; diamond-pattern dinner plate from Villeroy & Boch.

Hole in On

You will score major poin with this sandblasted vas from Tamar Glass.

The Rough

No matter what the turf sensible Belgian loafers will always make you feel grounded.

Over the Green

Scarlett O'Hara thought of it first, but you have to admit it's a great idea.

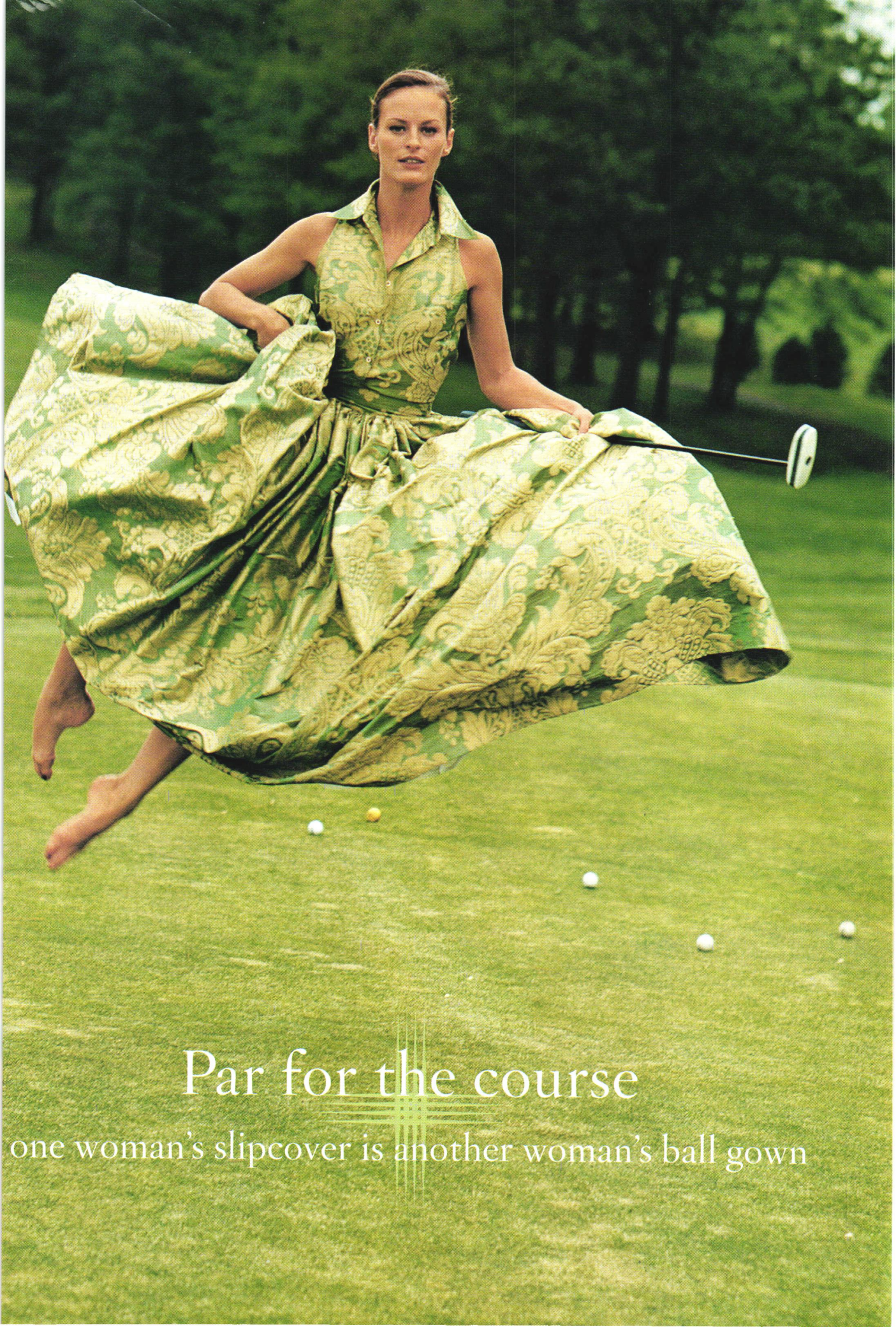
RIGHT: Schumacher's silk damask fabric leaps into action in a dress designed by Kimball Stoddard. Golf club specially made by DuPont Corian.

SOURCES, SEE BACK OF BOOK





Golf, golf, golf. When's this game going to be over?



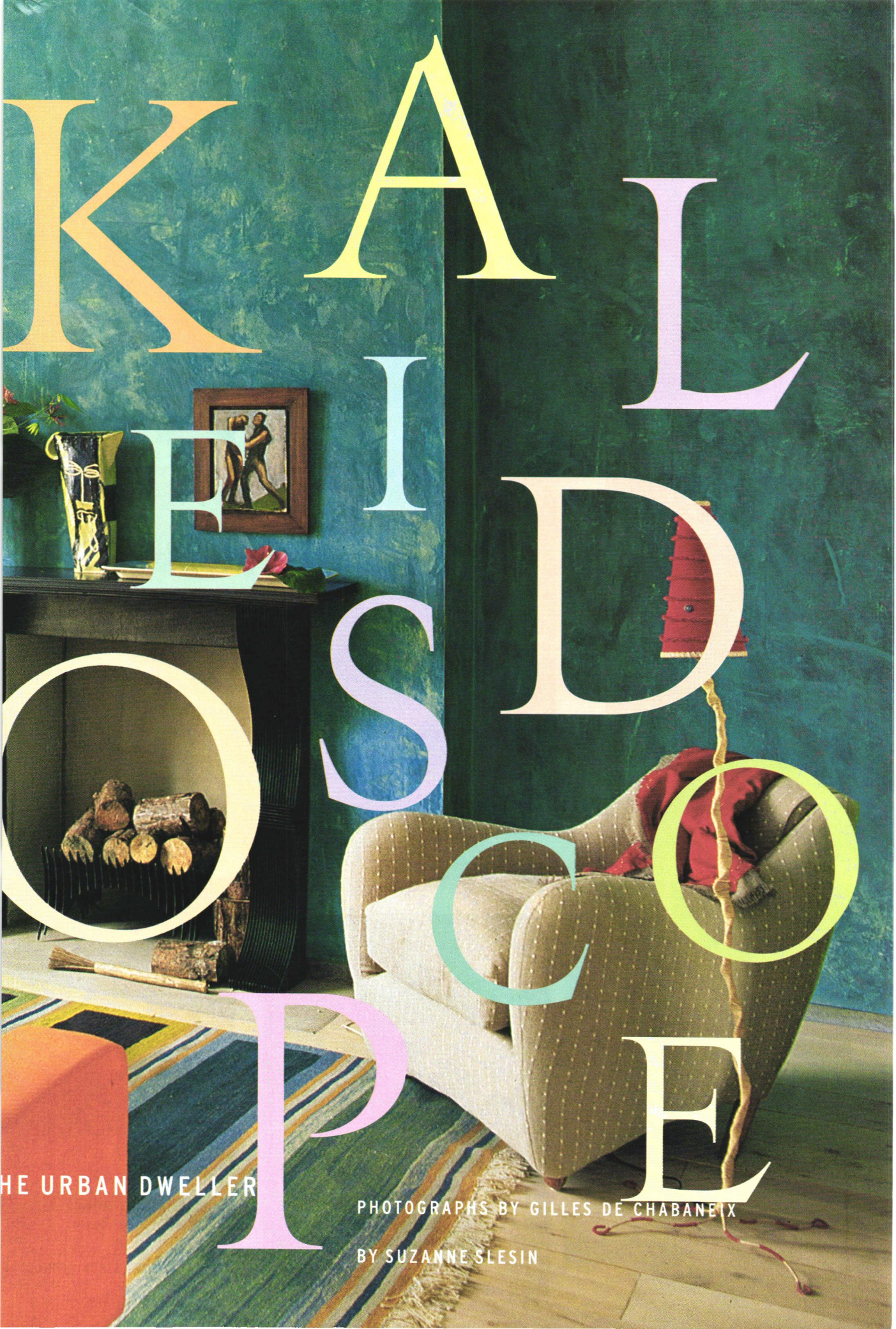
Par for the course

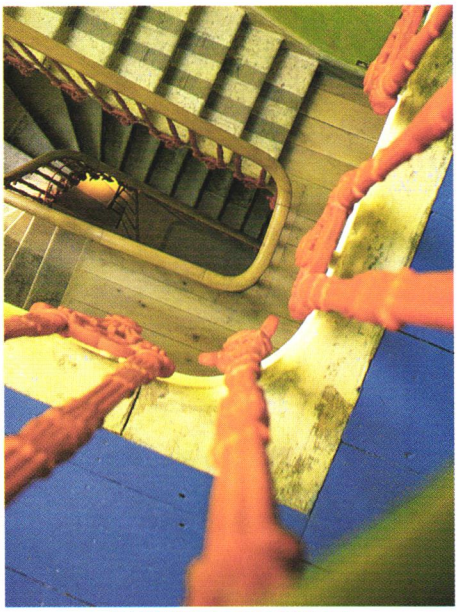
one woman's slipcover is another woman's ball gown

The London designer celebrates her signature color contrasts in a new book, "Tricia Guild in Town" (photographs excerpted on these pages). In her living room, the lamp by artist Helen Rawlinson, the orange sofa, the pink-and-chartreuse cabinet, and the deep turquoise wall are lively touches. The black metal mantelpiece is by furniture designer Tom Dixon.



TRICIA GUILD BRINGS HER PRISMATIC PAL

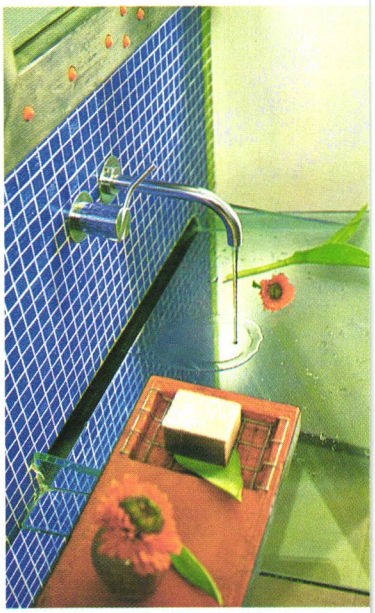

KALEIDOSCOPE
HE URBAN DWELLER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY GILLES DE CHABANEIX
BY SUZANNE SLESIN



ACCENTUATE THE ORANGE



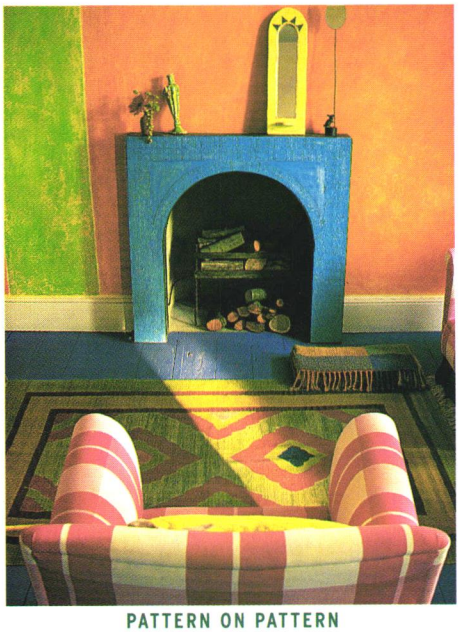
BLUE CHAIR IN THE STUDY



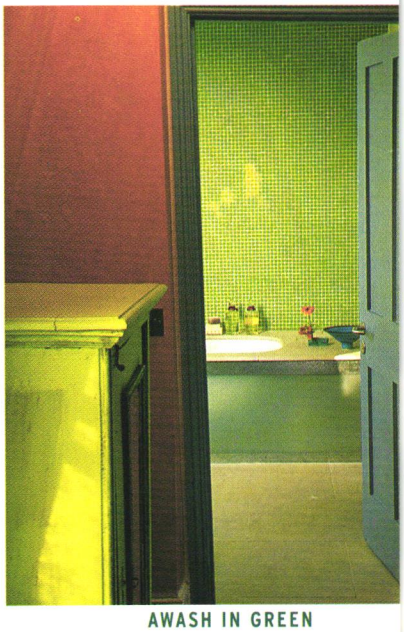
A SPLASH OF MOSAIC TILE



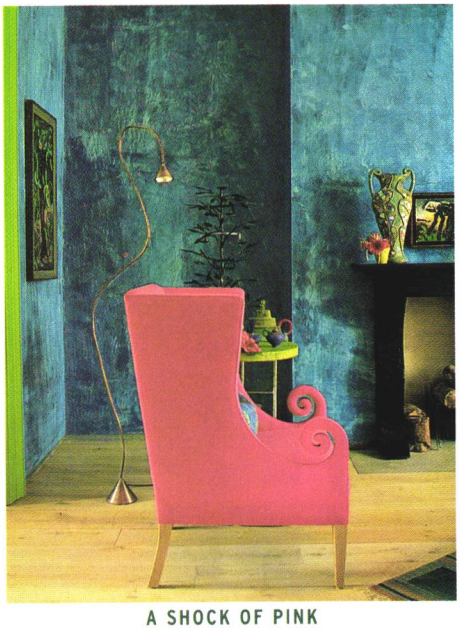
A POTTER'S CERAMIC TABLETOP



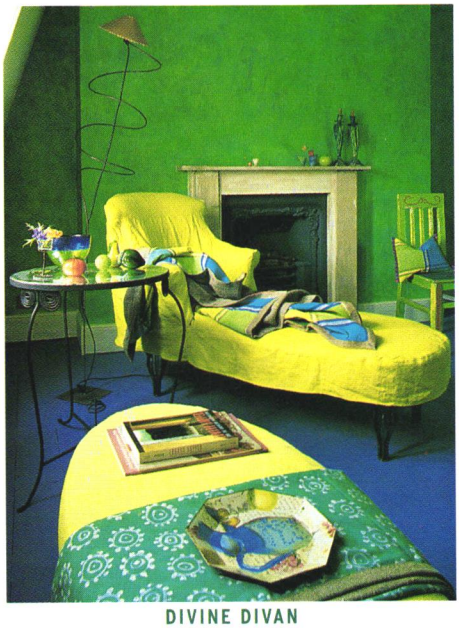
PATTERN ON PATTERN



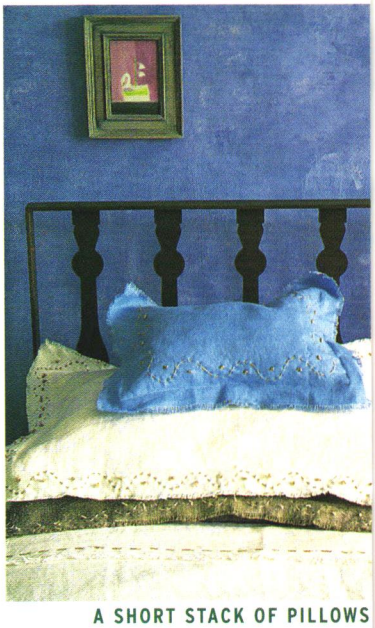
AWASH IN GREEN



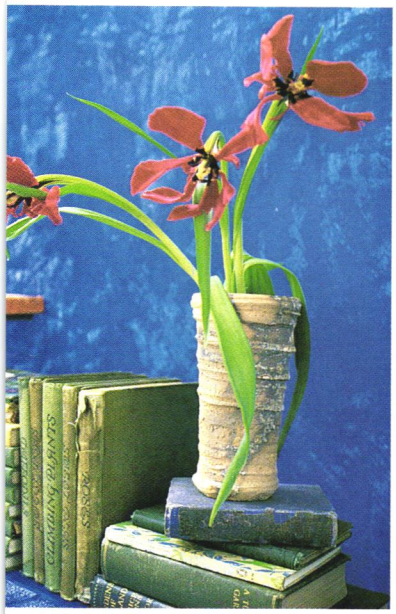
A SHOCK OF PINK



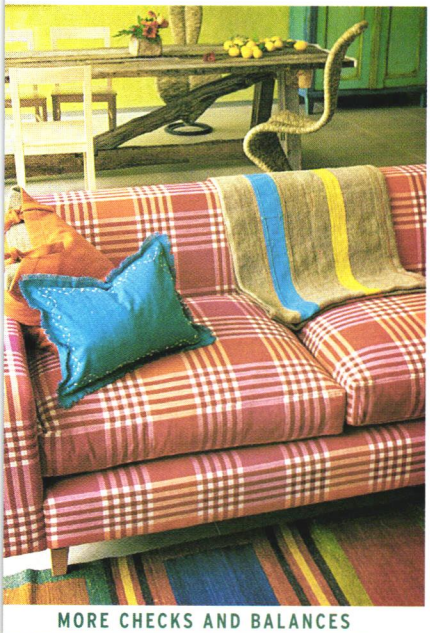
DIVINE DIVAN



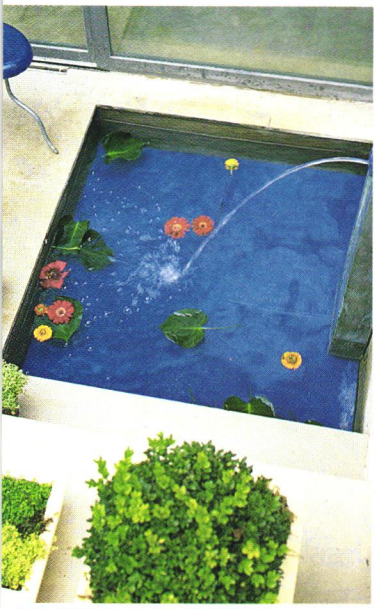
A SHORT STACK OF PILLOWS



RED TULIPS, COBALT WALL



MORE CHECKS AND BALANCES



RHAPSODY IN BLUE WATER

FOR TRICIA GUILD, color is the elixir of life. "Color gives me energy," says the English textile designer, author, and entrepreneur, who has just moved into a new house in London with her husband, Richard Polo, a restaurateur. Situated on a quiet, tree-lined residential street, the house presents a rather plain exterior. But once inside the front door, one is immediately under the spell of Guild's magical kingdom.

"Color can induce all sorts of responses," says Guild, who is masterful at juggling seemingly disparate patterns and hues. Highly textured plaster is contrasted with matte metal; bright plaids are juxtaposed with pale stone: "I like to live in an atmosphere that is exciting but also calming—I have a need for both."

The 1840 London town house is Guild's latest and most ambitious home-improvement project. In the early 1980s she swathed a town house in her signature pastel floral designs. Two years ago, she exuberantly displayed her Tuscan country house in *Tricia Guild's Country Color.* Now she has turned her focus to the urban environment. "I love the city. This is where we live. And I feel we have to celebrate it." And so she does, with her house taking the starring role in her seventh book, *Tricia Guild in Town,* published by Rizzoli this month.



PHOTOGRAPH BY RENÉ STOELTIE

TRICIA GUILD ASCENDING

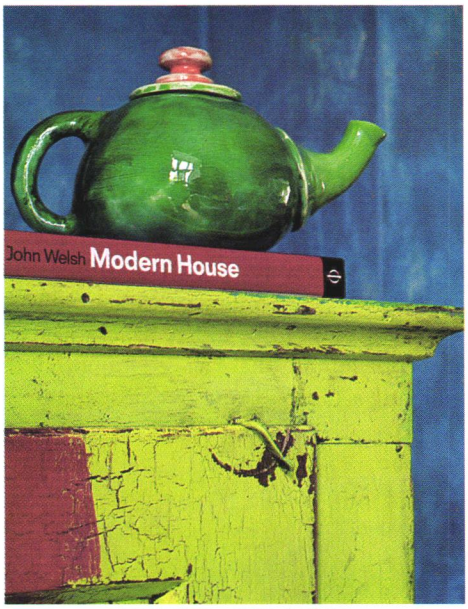
A year and a half of renovation was needed to transform the house from a cluster of tiny claustrophobic rooms into a light-filled aerie. Alfred Munkenbeck, a noted London minimalist architect, opened up the spaces yet kept some of the Victorian house's old details. Then Guild added her signature touches. Now the luscious deep-hued plaster walls look as if they are still wet; textured surfaces act as backdrops for contemporary arts-and-crafts objects and for the shapely pop-art-inspired furnishings that punctuate the rooms.

It is the unexpected combination of bright color and minimalist furnishings that creates her most striking effects

"I see the house as both very neutral and minimal, and very sensual and colored," Guild says. The conservatory that doubles as her study—a long, glorious, skylit space where books and plants are silhouetted against a textured deep-blue wall—is the pièce de résistance. The plaster was heavily pigmented so that the wall became a luminous cobalt sea. "Some people feel that blue is cold, but I find it the most spiritual color to live with," says Guild.

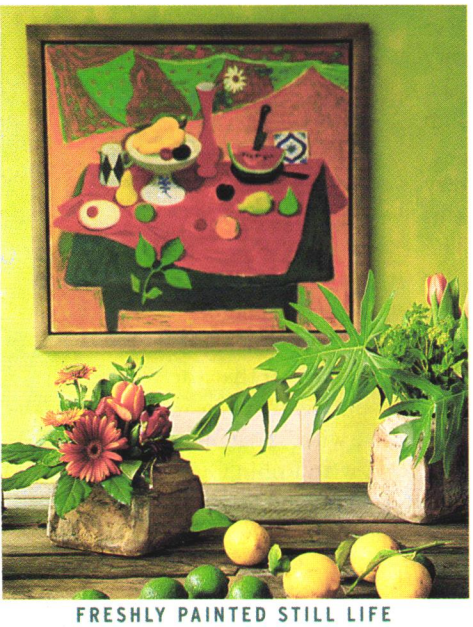
She founded Designers Guild in 1970, with Robin Guild, her former husband. Today, the nearly $38 million company (Tricia Guild is chairman) employs 230 people and distributes its products in over 50 countries. There are 2,500 *(Continued on page 330)*

ADAPTED FROM TRICIA GUILD IN TOWN, PUBLISHED BY RIZZOLI, NEW YORK.
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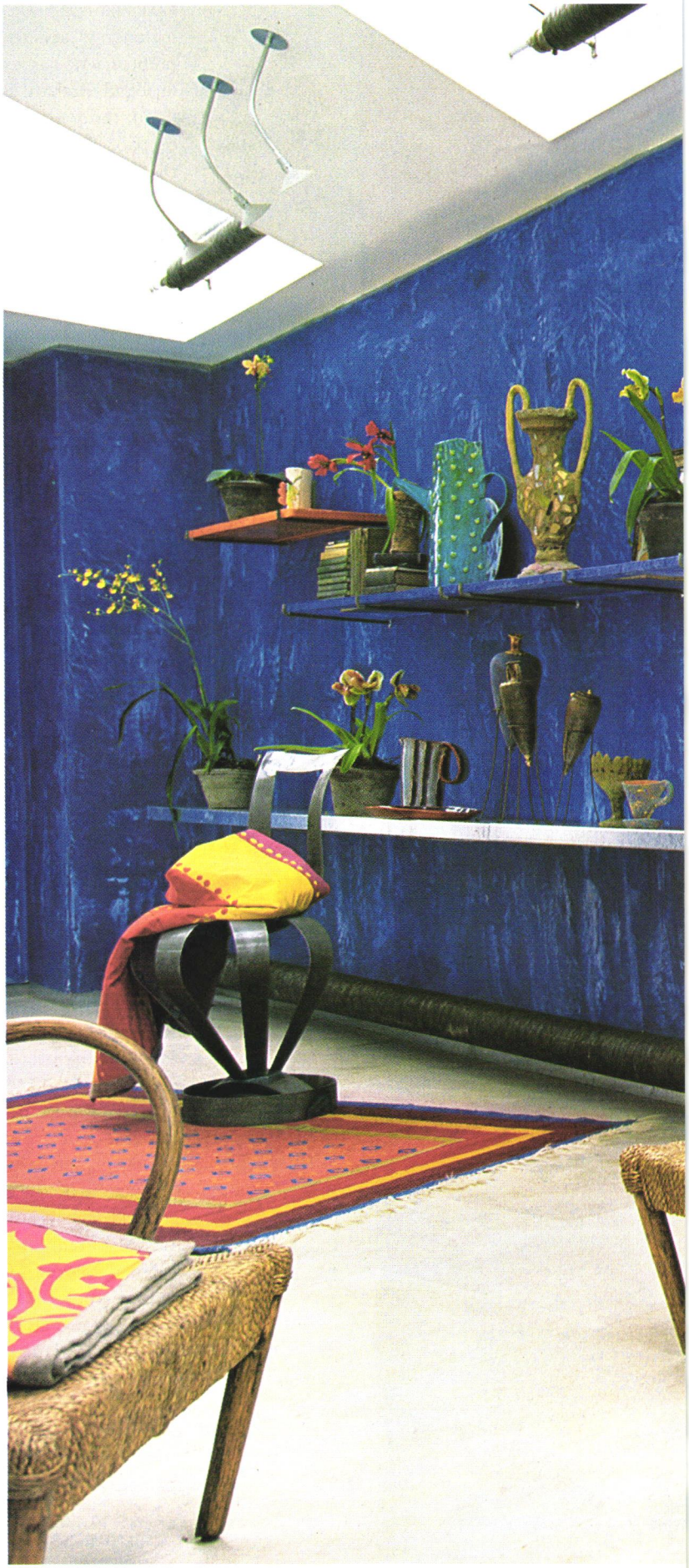


HIGH TEA, HOT COLOR

"I don't want to buy anyone else's decoration. When you walk into a house, you look for the little bit of spirit you can make yours"



FRESHLY PAINTED STILL LIFE

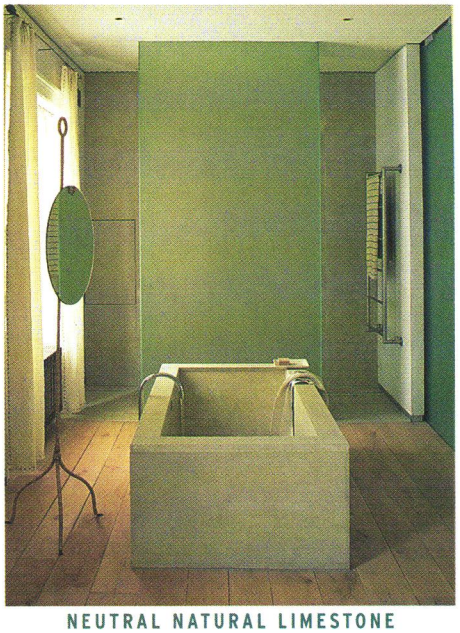




IN THE UNCONSERVATIVE CONSERVATORY, WOVEN SEA-GRASS COFFEE TABLE AND CHAIRS



EVERYTHING PLUS THE PICKLED ZINC



NEUTRAL NATURAL LIMESTONE

THE BED BEYOND THE BATH



fabrics and 500 wallpapers—floral geometric patterns, plaids and stri as well as bed linens, towels, pa products, china, candles, and jat designs for children. Guild's ideas rive from her travels—to In Morocco, China, Italy—from books she reads, the art she colle the people she sees. The resulting cannot be attributed to a partic place or style. Her idea is for peopl invent their own combinations. A her decorating, she calls it instinct "it's just what I do."

Her hands-on approach inclu working directly with the painter, carpenter, the upholsterer. She like experiment, even though "tak chances is difficult but also exciting because," she says, "do what you already know is safe but not enriching."

The unusual mantels are an example of Guild's risk tak Because the original fireplaces were long gone, she commissio potter Ralph Levy and furniture designer Tom Dixon to m new ones rather than trying to scare up period pieces.

"That's one of the ways I like to introduce contemporary and crafts into an interior," Guild says. But it is the unexpe combination of bright color and minimalist furnishings in high-ceilinged rooms that creates her most striking effects. "I for things to be minimal yet organic at the same time," she s So if vivid color is the yin, the serene neutrality of natural st bleached wood, and white walls is the yang. Against the int color of mosaic tiles, teapots, curtains, even scrubbing brus Guild juxtaposes soothing neutral elements: the monolithic li stone tub in the master bathroom; the pickled zinc on kitchen cabinets; Paul Anderson's gutsy rough-hewn nat wood table; the bleached wide-plank oak floors. The tonic panses of white ceiling take the edge off and support all that c Guild's attentiveness to detail is what gives the interior an e punch: a royal-blue chair by Maroeskal Metz is resplendent hot-pink room; lemons and limes echo the still life painte Alberto Morrocco; and old cou cabinets from Eastern Europe h been given washes of vibrant paint.

"It was a mess," says Guild of the h as she found it. "But that's what I lo don't want to buy anyone else's dec tion. When you walk into a house, look for the little bit of spirit you make yours." Here, that morsel of s was the original staircase—an or affair with a cast-iron banister that s up from the main entrance hall. G had the banister painted a bright ra ange. "Some people thought when first saw it that the orange was only undercoat," she says. A natural misun standing—but only for those who d know Tricia Guild.



Tricia's World

Fabrics and wallpapers are available from Osborne & Little through designers. Background and from left: Isika, Kusumam, and Oola fabrics; Kalamkari wallpaper. Dinnerware is available through Rosenthal Studio-Linie. Clockwise from top: Mamounia creamer, $135; bread-and-buttter plate, $40; Bokhara salad plate, $30; dinner plate, $40; bread-and-butter plate, $35; cup, $37; Mamounia sugar bowl, $125. Paper products and candles are distributed through Design Design, Inc., and sold at such stores as Barneys New York, Macy's, Marshall Field's, and Jacobson's. Top left: Dala giftwrap, $1.50/sheet; Lipika bag, $3; Kinjata napkins, $5 for 20; Akaliki box, seven for $65; candles, $8 a pair. Bed linens are sold at Private Lives, and ABC Carpet & Home, and from the Chambers catalogue. Pillowcases shown: Westbrook (plaid), $28; and Milroy (embroidered), $42. Wool Fair Isle blanket, $145, at Designers Guild store, London.
For more information, see Sources, back of book.

Between the shelter of the house and the labor of the garden, we often turn to small structures—gazebos, pavilions, tree houses and teahouses—places sometimes meant for contemplation, sometimes for recreation. And what better place to lay aside the routine business of life than this rococo belvedere, where a game of croquet almost as fanciful as Alice's in Wonderland awaits players willing to submit to its architectural charms?

Summerhouse in Warren, CT designed by George Carter, Silverstone Farm, N. Elmham, Dereham, Norfolk NR20 5EA, England, 44-136-266-130,and constructed by Bruce Dyke. Victorian-style chairs: iron, $3,760/set of 4, Brahms-Netski Antique Passage, 234 E. 60th St., NYC, NY 10022. 212-755-8307. Croquet set: poly-resin wickets, maple and ash mallets and balls, $1,200, Brian Foster's Garden Architecture, 719 So. 17th St., Philadelphia, PA 19146. 215-545-5442. Barrel-shaped garden stool: early 20th-century, glazed earthenware, $1,200, Treillage Ltd., 418 E. 75th St., NYC, NY 10021. 212-535-2288. Blue-and-gray blanket: Hampton plaid, cashmere, $850, Calvin Klein Home. For store information, 800-294-7978. More sources, see back of book.



PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARIANNE MAJERUS
STYLED BY PIERRE CANDRA

BORDERS FOR A NEW WORLD

WITH A CRISP DIVISION OF LABOR AND AN INTREPID SENSE OF HISTORY, A VIRGINIA COUPLE CREATE A GRAND ENGLIS GARDEN ON A SMALL SCALE



The knot garden, planted with 'Vardar Valley' common box, is set off by pea gravel and pink 'Coral Bell' azaleas beyond. Virginia's Blue Ridge mountains are seen in the distance. The spring garden, right, with two of its 60 varieties of peonies (the white is 'Festiva Maxima,' and the pink, 'Gay Paree') backed by 'Bristol Ruby' weigela and underplanted with 'Heavenly Blue' veronica.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY CHRISTOPHER BAKER WRITTEN BY SENGA MORTIMER AND VICKY MO



WHEN it comes to their gardens, Virginians have a long tradition of being able to out-English the English. If George Washington and Thomas Jefferson set the standard for horticulture when Virginia was still a colony, local garden clubs have maintained it ever since. One of the attributes of a great garden, Virginia style, is a long pedigree, and the ultimate signature of approval is a place on the tour of the Horticultural Field Day organized by the

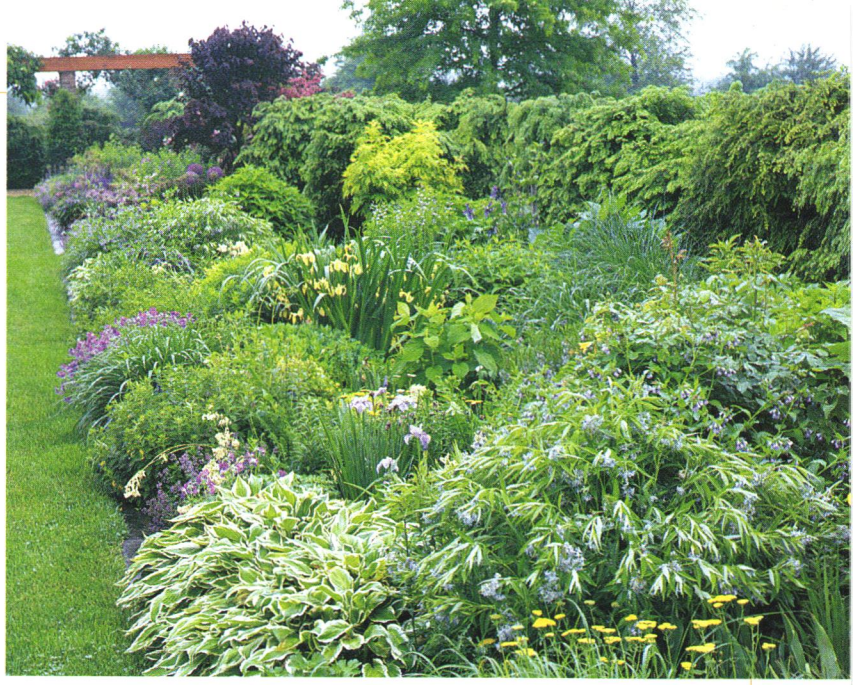


arden Club of Virginia. So it was a special umph for newcomers Jim and Donna ackman of Highland Spring Garden to ad themselves in this company. At first ance, the gardens that lie between the deral-style brick house and a superb view the Blue Ridge Mountains seem as well tablished as any of the colonial restora-ons taking place in Fauquier County. aded by giant oaks and nestled alongside hick wood they appear to be the handi-ork of a contemporary of Jefferson's. The asion of maturity is, however, a calculated ception. The two-acre Highland Spring rden was planted only seven years ago.

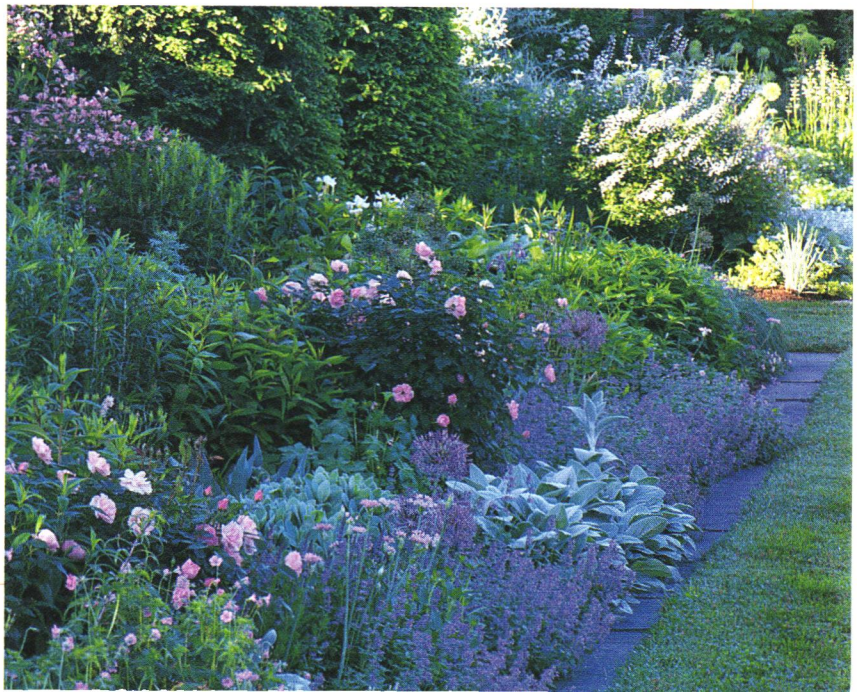
The gardens—which invite the visitor to oll through opulent perennial borders, a dwood and brick pergola, an allée of crab ple trees, a remarkable spring garden anted for scent, and a sunken herb gar-n—are the work of an extraordinarily ntle woman. When the Hackmans took le to Highland Spring, Donna set out, th the help of her husband, Jim, a builder, d their daughter, Elizabeth, to create a rden that would adapt traditional styles contemporary life.

The distinctly new-world twist to the ackmans' old-world garden is apparent in e hands-on approach to every aspect of e project. When asked which of the many blished patterns for knot gardens she ed, Donna replies, striking a characteris-note of Emersonian self-reliance, that e designed both parterres herself. The me is true of the arches, arbor, garden use, and pergola. Self-reliance is the iding principle of her garden's mainte-nce as well: she does the planting, weed-g, and pruning; Jim does the mowing, ging, and trimming.

Nowhere is Donna Hackman's interest in rticultural history more apparent than in e grand sweep of parallel perennial beds ose flowers flow over their flagstone







e red and purple border, left, with three rare bar-ry shrubs planted between purple sand cherry trees d accented by scattered *Allium* 'Globemaster' and e smaller 'Purple Sensation'. Yellow and blue border, , with yellow 'Schwellenberg' *Achillea, Iris pseudo-rus*, 'Johnson's Blue' *Geranium* and golden elder-ry. White and silver border, center, with more *Allium ptisia abla* 'Pendula,' and snow-in-summer. The pink d lavender border, bottom, contains, among other asures, Gertrude Jekyll's favorite rose, 'Nathalie ples,' pink weigela, *Allium christophii, Stachys elene Von Stein,'* and *Nepeta* x *faassenii.*





The sunken herb garden, above, with blue *Phlox subulata* overflowing the flagstone wall. At the rear, an arch of five-leaf *Akebia quinata* drapes the fountain, and seven varieties of clematis scramble up the wall. Donna Hackman with her daughter, Elizabeth, also a gardener, passes on her knowledge of unusual peonies. In the yellow and blue border, below, the 'Graham Thomas' rose, the only yellow rose in the garden, mingles with the old-time herb comfrey. Four Alberta spruce, right, dominate the overview of the herb garden, while two skeletal Kousa dogwood give height to the rectangular beds at the back and frame the garden bench next to the wall.



borders. The atmosphere of this, the m carefully articulated part of the garder unabashedly English. And yet, the plan remarkably well into the surrounding la scape. The banks of perennials are bac on either side by six-foot walls of Canac hemlock—a magnificent foil for the flo display and one not seen on the other s of the Atlantic.

For all of its careful calculation, ther something dramatically unrestrained ab the color and texture of the planting Highland Spring. The four perennial b ders are so heavily planted there is no n for staking. They are each a full 12 f deep and 60 feet long. The sensation texture and abundance are overwhelm as one proceeds past two pairs of be each with its own color scheme and e planted to flower sequentially. A bed w lavender and pink flow faces one planted in yel and blue. A display of si and white perennials is across from a profusion blossoms in which reds purples dominate: a butte bush ('Royal Red') match purple phlox (*Paniculata*); deep magenta of catc (*Lychnis coronaria*) echoes hue of 'Mme. Julia Corre clematis.

The brilliant swath color is bounded on the side by a clematis- and r covered pergola whose b piers and redwood arc mark a terminus to this overwhelm display. A pea gravel path passes unc neath the pergola extending through allée of clipped crab apple trees unc planted with pale yellow and white nar si, grape hyacinth, blue pansies, wh bleeding heart, and Virginia bluebells, lowed by Oriental poppies, and, for e fall, blue *Caryopteris* and pink and wh Japanese anemones.

After passing under the giant o whose commanding presence determi the site of the house and influenced shape of its garden, you enter a woodl garden that is purely American. The pla ings of Solomon's seal, astilbe, and hos to name just a few, follow a delightfully structured pattern. A return to the m house takes you uphill past a charm garden house and *(continued on page*





Like the little garden house, the glorious welcoming arch was designed and built by the Hackmans. It is smothered with *Rosa eglanteria*, purple jackman clematis, and the climber rose 'Pink Perpétue.' The fragrant spring garden behind it is underplanted with lady's-mantle and billowing with the hybrid musk rose, 'Ballerina,' a repeat bloomer.





a lily pond, stocked with goldfish and alive with the sounds of croaking frogs. One of the delights of visiting Highland Spring comes from experiencing its subtle variations on recurring garden themes, elevation chief among them. A change in elevation prepares you each time you enter or leave a different part of the garden. After the knot garden you take two steps down to the perennial borders and out to the pergola. From there a gentle grade leads to the allée and into the woodland walk and past the lily pond. From that point, you ascend a set of steps to the pool. A final surprise comes with the discovery of the sunken garden on the north side of the pool.

The varied uses of water are equally arresting. Water is seen in the lily pond, the swimming pool, and the fountain in the herb garden—the same element always in a new context. At every stage, the garden is alive and settled in its surroundings. If the sophistication at work here seems worthy of a professional landscape designer, that is no accident; Donna Hackman has recently turned her avocation into a vocation and has a long list of clients.

Throughout these two acres, the sheer volume and diversity of flowers is a constant reminder that Donna Hackman's knowledge of plants is encyclopedic. The care required to find, plant, and prune so many different gardens programmed to follow separate blooming cycles boggles the mind. Her persistence in seeking out the flowers she wants is legendary. A trip of 80 miles or more, with stops at a dozen nurseries is not uncommon when she is on the scent of a new discovery.

Perhaps the crowning achievement of these gardens are the masses of bees, butterflies, and birds filling the air above the flowers. Their presence attests to the Hackmans' policy of using the absolute minimum of pesticides. Donna and Jim are friends of nature, and their affection is amply reciprocated by the world they have created at Highland Spring.



A pair of lead cranes, above, guard the lily pond, which is rimmed with white pansies and blue grape hyacinth. White azaleas, left, with five-year-old 'Pink Impression' tulips surround an urn planted with variegated hosta. The crab-apple allée to the left leads to the Woodland Stroll. The rare chartreuse spirea 'Limemound', right, was planted under the purple wisteria to add contrast to the spring bulbs. In the background, the log cabin.





GROUND RULES

Subtle changes in elevation allow for the withholdi

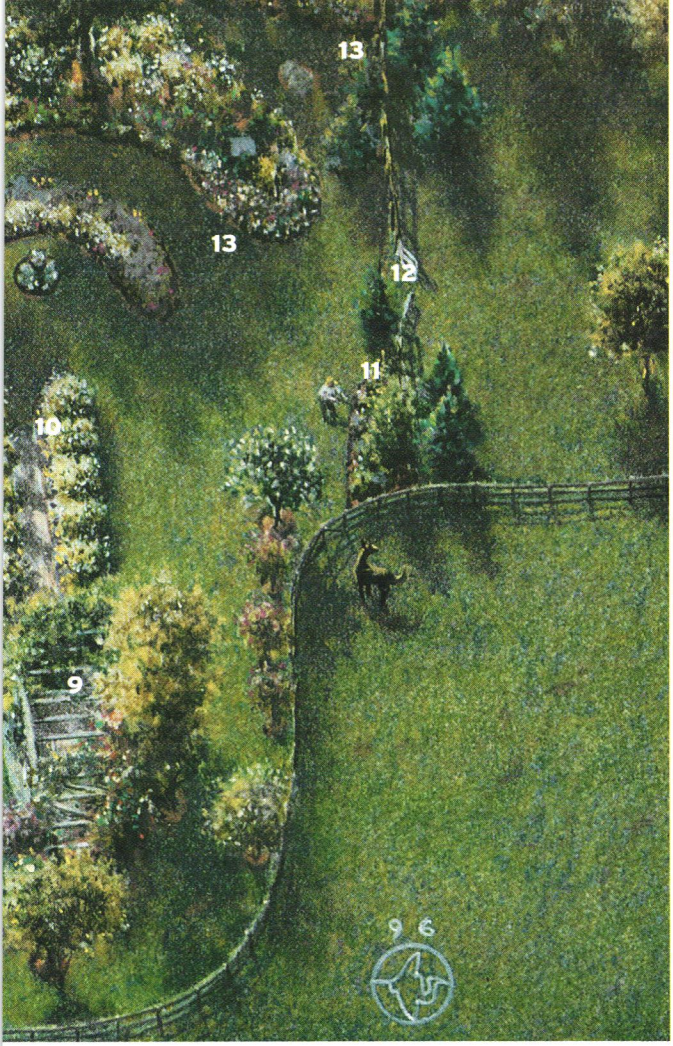
Elevation

ALL BUT A FEW OF THE BEST gardens work in harmony with the natural contours of the landscape, and yet most novices think their gardens should be absolutely flat. The trouble is that flat gardens, unless they are quite small or enclosed, tend to appear stilted and repetitive. Subtle changes in elevation are a simple means of breaking up the monotony and breathing life into landscape clichés. However, terracing slopes and cutting garden steps should be approached with great caution, since minor adjustments in height may disturb the natural harmony, and once disturbed, harmony is difficult to restore.The risks of erosion and flooding are also serious considerations. Skillful changes in elevation, the withholding and revealing of delights, provide the surprise and variety that mark an interesting garden regardless of its style. A measured sequence of levels should keep the eye busy but not bewildered. Gardeners unfamiliar with Russell Page's *The Education of a Gardener* or Ian McHarg's *Design With Nature* may find these books helpful in this regard.

—BY SENGA MORTIMER



MEASURED EASE In the sunken herb ga above, the eye is entertained by the spring sl red and white tulips underplanted with herb level, and on the other, a more subdued spla *Phlox subulata* in front of American box.



A Robin's Eye View

1 Entrance courtyard
2 Knot garden
3 Lavender and pink border
4 Yellow and blue border
5 Silver and white border
6 Red and purple border
7 Entrance arch to spring garden
8 Canadian hemlock hedge
9 Redwood pergola with brick piers
10 Crab-apple allée
11 Elizabeth's garden
12 Entrance to field before the Log Cabin
13 Woodland Stroll garden
14 Spring garden
15 Well house
16 Garden house
17 Lily pond
18 Woods
19 Pool house
20 Sunken herb garden
21 Open back patio
22 Enclosed sun porch
23 Rear entrance to garden

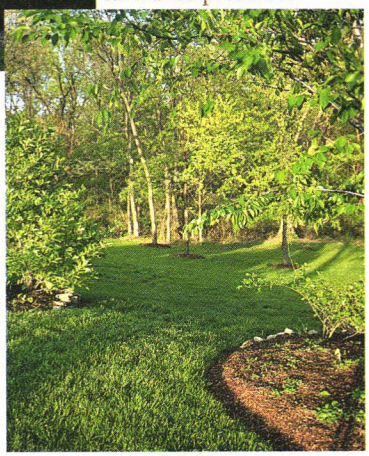
ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES TUGHAN

ing of delights. They should be designed to keep the eye busy but not bewildered



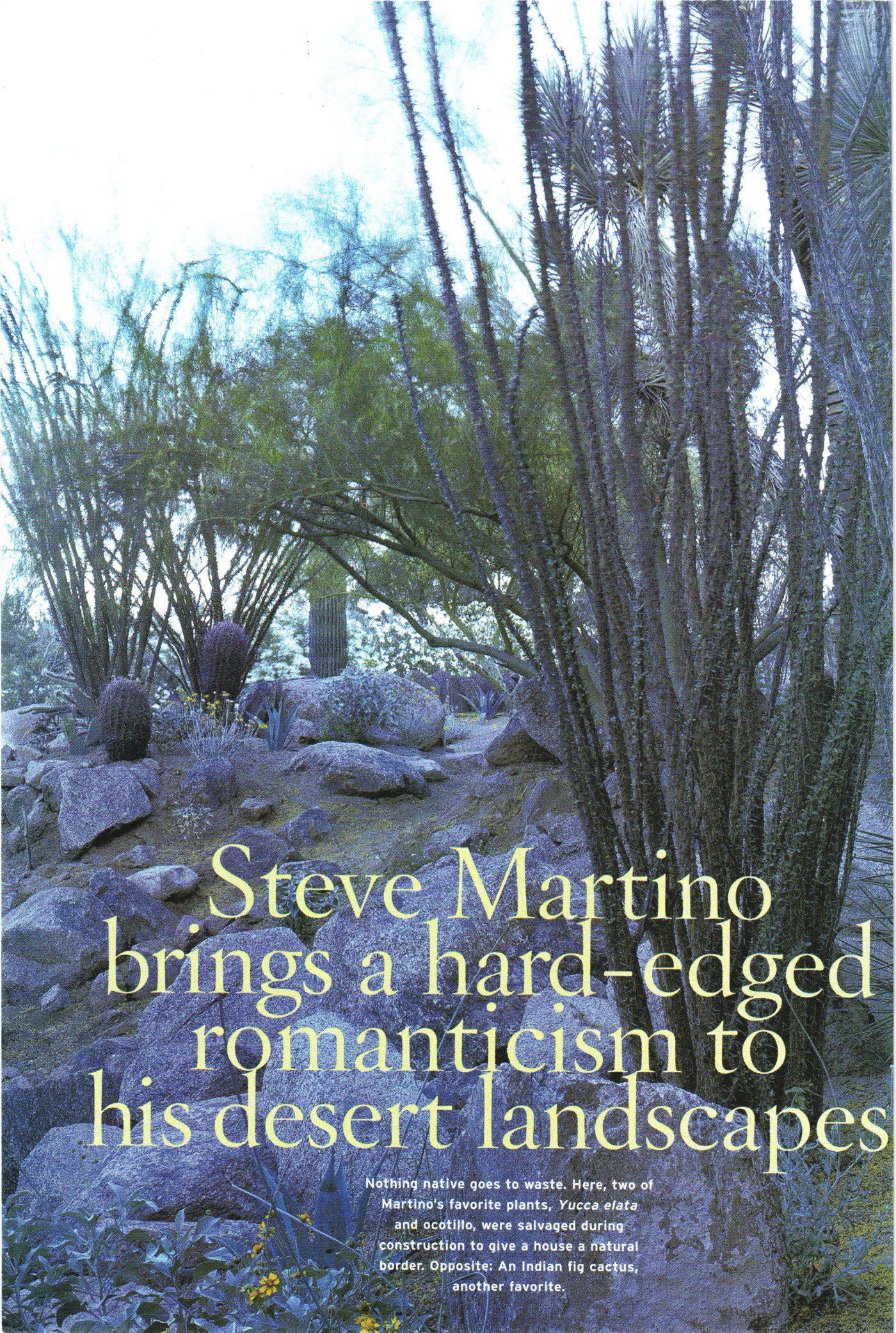
SWEET RELIEF After the eye has been busy taking in the intricately planted knot garden, left, it can find the relief it needs by looking up and coming to rest on the cows grazing in the pasture beyond. The mixture of levels here is the sort of accident the Hackmans enjoy and are careful to preserve.

AND ENTRANCES Aptly named to describe rling paths that undulate through several sorts of cover, right, the Woodland Stroll is perfectly con- to give the appearance of being more the work of than of man—or woman. The Stroll divides the woods on one side from the naturalistic garden on er and leads to a path that crosses a level expanse of he view here is broken by the garden house on one d by the judicious use of garden ornaments through- area. The contours here are subtle but alluring: a grade leads from the lawn down to the surprise of pond; three circular steps separate and isolate the charms of the pond from the more architectural the swimming pool above it.





GUIDED TOUR Two simple flagstone steps flanked on the top by a pair of planted urns, above, direct the eye across a stretch of lawn, punctuated by another urn, to the pergola above the great perennial borders. When you descend the steps you find yourself at eye level with the borders, enveloped by their color, fragrance, and texture. A pair of boxwood provides some respite from the overwhelming display.

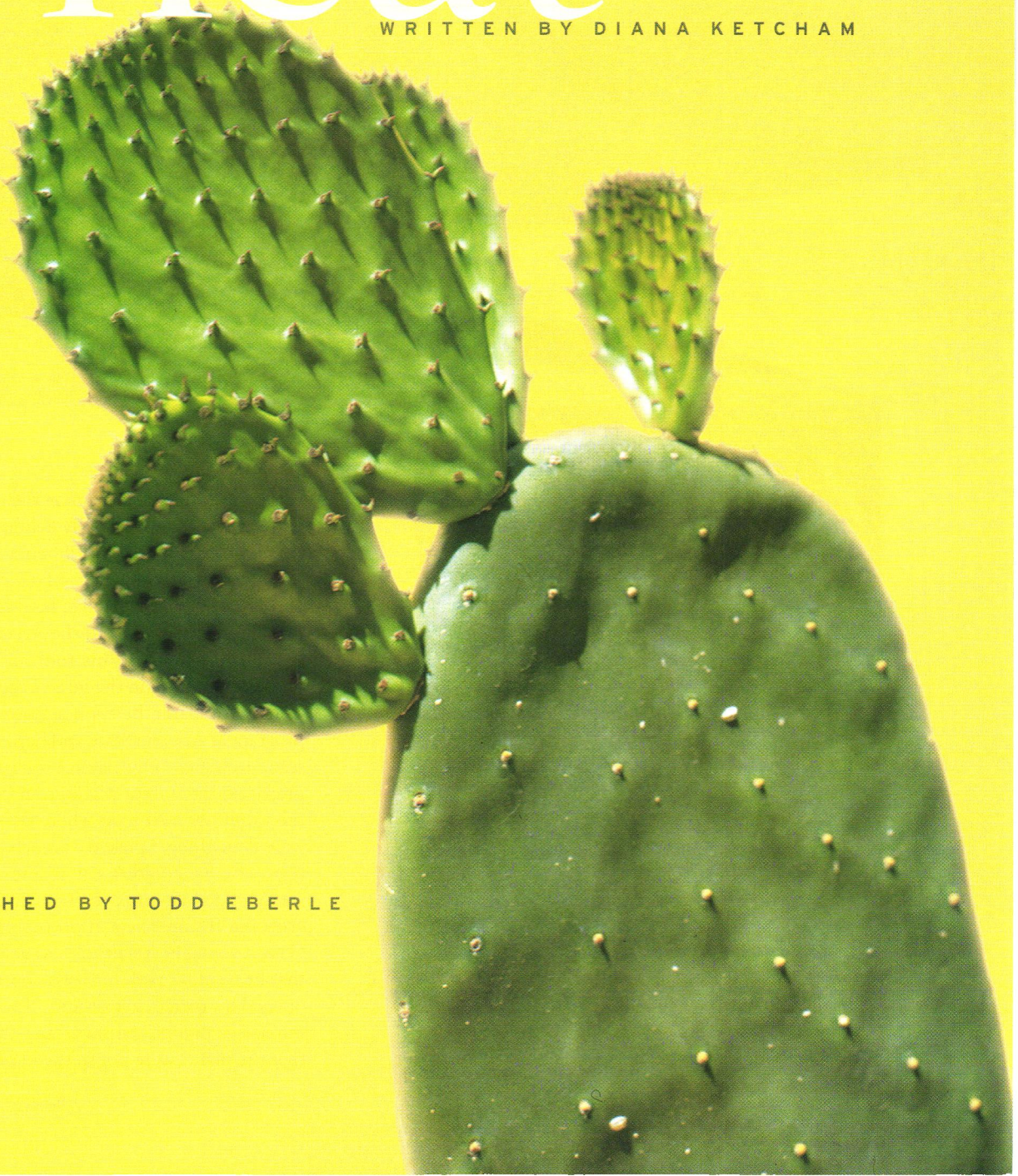


Steve Martino brings a hard-edged romanticism to his desert landscapes

Nothing native goes to waste. Here, two of Martino's favorite plants, *Yucca elata* and ocotillo, were salvaged during construction to give a house a natural border. Opposite: An Indian fig cactus, another favorite.

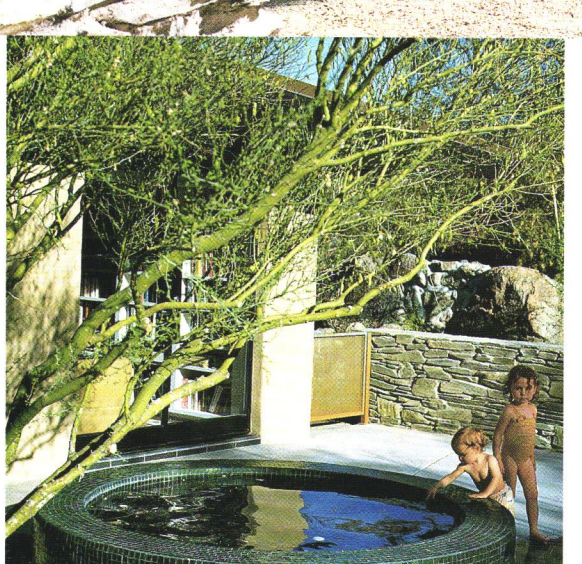
Prickly heat

WRITTEN BY DIANA KETCHAM



OTOGRAPHED BY TODD EBERLE





A curved and tilted yellow wall, top, matches the color of the plants on the hills behind it. A fireplace in the wall, a picnic area above the steps, and the pool, below, make a complete room.

It was stealing

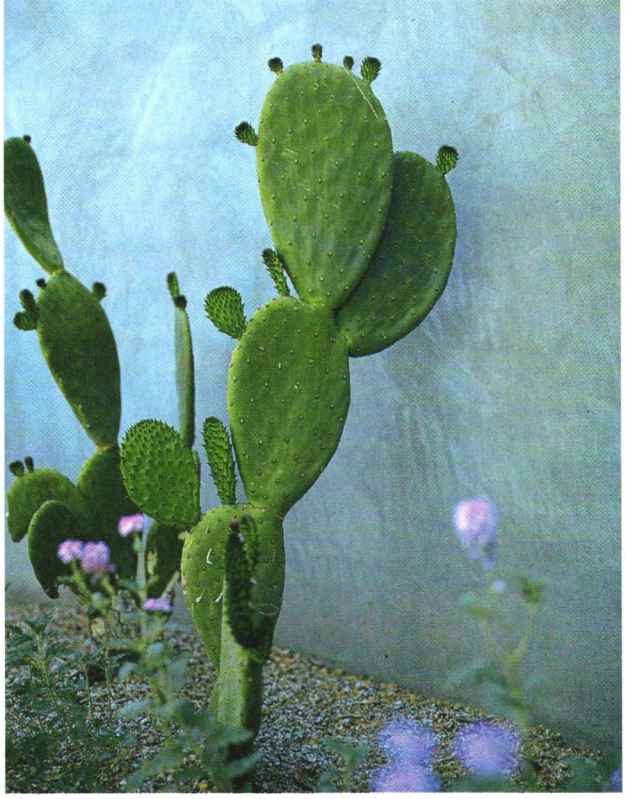
cars that set Steve Martino on the road to landscape chitecture. "I was a juvenile delinquent," Martino sa recalling his boyhood in Phoenix during the 1950s. stole cars and that sort of thing." Expelled fr parochial school at twelve, he was given a choice tween reform school and the Arizona Boys Ranch. chose the ranch and his four and a half years th schooled Martino in the lore of the Sonoran Desert.

Ten years later, he dropped out of the architect program at Arizona State and began working for a la scape architect. "One day as I was putting down turf a preparing the soil for Mediterranean plants, I looked the vacant lot next to us where all of these native pla were flourishing. I picked a branch off one and asked boss why we couldn't use it. He said, 'Why, that' weed.' " Martino took the branch around to local nu eries, but the only person who could identify it was R Gass, a young horticulturist. Martino was so impress that he went to work for Gass's nursery. By 1974, he h opened his own design studio. "I was begging clients use native plants," he says. "But the real problem w that the plants were not in the marketplace. You had

out into the desert. Ron and I traveled all over north- Mexico together collecting seeds."

Martino enjoys telling such stories, episodes in his e from local bad boy to one of the Southwest's most luential landscape architects. We are driving around oenix in his Trooper. It feels like 110 degrees out, the ndows are wide open, and he is not about to put on air-conditioning for the sake of a tenderfoot writer. rtino is a big man, tall and craggy-faced, immaculate a freshly ironed cotton shirt and jeans. At fifty, he l has a bad-boy air. Clearly, success has not mellowed disdain for most of what has been built in Phoenix. As he drives, he waves one arm dismissively at the ssing scene. "Asphalt, hotter than gravel," he says. awn, high maintenance. Olive trees, polluting." In ttsdale's restored Old Town, he snickers at the maze street furniture and the lampposts with their gon-wheel motif: "Fussy, nostalgic, too small." For rtino, the worst that can be said about Phoenix de- n is "it could be anywhere. Look at that grass and ms," he says. "We could be in Palm Beach."

The same cannot be said of Martino's own projects: e new Phoenix Central Library; Arid Zone Trees, a m for the cultivation of indigenous species; the ter- e at the Desert Botanical Garden; the City Boundary installation; and a score of desert restoration pro- ts, plazas, and corporate and private gardens. Now t regionalism is the design world's most respectable



The Indian fig cactus, above, is one kind of green, while the specially mixed cement wall is another. Their conjunction is characteristic of Martino's daring and sensitivity. It is difficult to tell from this garden sanctuary, below, that the house behind it is part of a hillside development. The wild desert garden and curved lavender wall create the atmosphere of a world apart.





ideology, Martino's devotion to the native plants of his native place has given him an international standing.

Walking into the Phoenix *New Times* courtyard, part of a former grade-school campus redesigned by Martino, you understand what he means when he says he wants to bring "the desert into the city." Low walls enclose a world of muted colors and textures where light is filtered through a canopy of mesquite. Martino's changes are unobtrusive: a self-renewing fountain and gulleys that irrigate the trees with captured rain. "It's a magical place," says the newspaper's owner, Jim Larkin. "My writers would rather work here than at home."

Frederick Steiner, director of the School of Planning and Landscape Architecture at Arizona State University, says Martino has "reinterpreted the desert as a human setting. It's not just that he was one of the first to use native plants—he uses them in a way that captures the human imagination."

Martino learned landscape design on his own. To teach himself about plants, he studied the arroyo, or desert wash. "The wash is where the action is in the desert," he says. "It is where the animals like to be and the plants there are lush and mysterious." Martino photographed the vegetation in the wash, abstracting from it his repertoire of plant combinations. "The complexity of his combinations is what sets his work apart," Steiner says. "What is called a desert garden is often just a couple of cactuses next to some rocks. Anybody can set desert plants by themselves and get a dramatic effect. Steve knows how to put them together."

If Martino has been victorious in his crusade on behalf of indigenous desert plants, he is not an ecological purist. He enjoys a skirm with those who make a r gion of native plants: "Th are people in Denver w want to rip out all of the otic trees," he says. "I c agree. Denver needs all of trees." He also deplores t categorization of landsca architects as either artists socially responsible envir mentalists, what he ca "the split between the w people and the good pe ple." No one can deny th Martino has been one of t environmentalists' "goo people. But he hankers af the freedom of out-and-o artist-landscapers such Martha Schwartz in Ca bridge, Massachusetts, a San Francisco's Topl Delaney. "When I see wh Topher is doing," he says, think she is having more fun than I am." Judging by recent private gardens, Martino is beginning to ha the kind of fun that puts him squarely in the traditi of artist-landscapers.

At the Jack DeBartolo residence, Martino work with a horizontal concrete house on a ridge directly f ing Camelback, the rock formation that constitu Phoenix's most desirable desert view. As is too oft the case in Phoenix, the unframed, straight-on vi of Camelback is overwhelming, almost unseeab Martino diffused the view by creating a contrasting s ondary vista along the side of the house. A row of co crete columns guides the eye across a pool to a wall l yond it. A window in that wall offers a deep narr desert vista. To reinforce this second visual ax Martino relied on structure more than plants. pushed the pool to the far end of the lot, erected co crete walls, and created a grid of lawn and concrete the space between.

No view

at all: the Hawkinson garden presented the oppos problem: no view at all. The site is a tiny walled ba yard in a residential development. Here Martino's bo ness lay in replacing the straight white walls with cu ing, brightly colored walls and concrete sculpture. "T midday sun flattens everything and takes out all t color," Martino says. His solution was to place a co crete orb and blue pyramid alongside some prickly p and agave in front of the walls. Martino favors th cactuses because they "hold their own against the s

l cast wonderful shadows." Pointing to a palo verde, e of his trademark trees, he says he planted it for the e of its shadows. "Where you have a wall, it lifts dows from the ground and makes them visible. They ome architectural ornaments."

At the garden he remodeled for newspaper publisher Larkin, Martino ripped out the asphalt patios and ol, replacing them with crushed granite. Then, along back of the lot, he ran an 80-foot concrete wall of a ring yellow. This large architectural gesture pulls to-her a busy space containing an outdoor fireplace, becue, dining table, and a children's wading pool. wed from the house, the yellow wall hides the gar-n's problematic edge, which Martino calls "a fussy able of plants and rocks." From the hillside above, line of the wall echoes the roofline and the horizon. e whole design takes control of the desert view, orga-ing it into a set of three horizontal lines.

These intelligent gardens demonstrate Martino's sp of the paradox of creating a private landscape ere the natural landscape is as compelling as it is in Sonoran desert. It is the same paradox that con-nted the champions of the eighteenth-century "nat-l garden." Once you realize, in the words of William nt, that "all nature is a garden," what is left for land-pe artists to do? In the desert, the light and land-ms are so commanding they cry out for framing de-es, not only for the groves and rows of shade trees t Martino has championed but for architecture, for ls. Rather than taking a misguidedly reverent stance ward the natural setting, Martino responds to the ert's boldness with forms that are also bold.







The wedge-shaped wall at the back of this house, opposite, tilts toward the pool. Its fireplace is echoed in the outdoor cooking area above it. A fountain and a Jacuzzi complete a perfectly judged pleasure dome. The *Opuntia santa-rita* cactus 'Tubac,' top, chosen for its beautiful hues. Martino, above, atop the wall of the City BoundaryProject. A private garden, left, with what Martino calls "the usual suspects": agave, prickly pear, ocotillo, saguaro. Sources, see back of book.

FEAST

LEGENDARY VINTNER HELEN TURLEY CELEBRATES

FOR A FIRST

THE DEBUT OF HER OWN GRAPES WITH A NAPA

HARVEST

VALLEY DINNER AS DISTINCTIVE AS HER WINES



WRITTEN BY ALISON COOK

FOOD PHOTOGRAPHED BY LISA CHARLES WATSON

VINEYARD PHOTOGRAPHED BY BRIGITTE LACOMBE

PRODUCED BY LORA ZARUBIN

STYLED BY JEFFREY W. MILLER





In the cocoon of a viny pergola, previous page, left, an army of glassware awaits the noses of a tough wine-country audience; right, yesterday this squab scratched and pecked in Modesto; today it consorts with an earthy gratin of beans from chef Thomas Keller. Helen Turley and John Wetlaufer, left, have spent a lifetime pursuing the perfect grape.

Yes please yes please yes please," chants John Wetlaufer, half impish and half insistent, extending an empty champagne flute toward his towering brother-in-law. Larry Turley, wielding a ritual magnum of Veuve Cliquot, moves his NBA-sized frame among the dozen guests assembled on his wooden deck, pouring and joshing and exercising his delighted, neighing laugh. Howell Mountain rises blue in the east; zinfandel vines advance in ranks on the rambly, 1850s redwood house and adjoining winery; Mill Creek gurgles subliminally a few dozen feet away. It is the kind of silky Napa Valley twilight that makes Napatistas so infernally pleased with their sybaritic little ecosystem, one of the few places in America where good food, good wine, and good weather are regarded as the natural order of things.

There is cause to celebrate, especially for the tall, deliberate woman talking quietly as she leans against the far railing, a silver boar pin clasped at her throat, sturdy sandals that speak of the '60s strapped to her feet. Helen Turley, whose famously scarce handmade chardonnays and pinot noirs have made her one of the hottest names in American wine making, has just harvested her first crop of Marcassin Vineyard grapes—the ones on which she and her husband, John Wetlaufer, have spent five painstaking years, not to mention their life savings; the ones they believe will provide her best chance yet to make great wine.

Born of a steep Sonoma Coast hillside that feels like the back of beyond, these are pinot noir grapes with a pedigree, delicate matte-blue pearls that make their marble-sized, super-cloned California brethren look almost crass. Their arrival into the world has be highly unconventional by Ca fornia standards, too: as far Turley can determine, Marcas is the state's first meter-by-me planting, in which vines densely packed at one-meter tervals, in rows a scant one me apart. "Farming for flavor," s and Wetlaufer call it with t drollery that tends to bubble the surface of their measur scholarly talk; by which th mean subjecting their meti lously hand-tended vines to t benign stress of close spacing, then stricting them to producing a very sm amount of tiny, concentrated fruit. the viticultural equivalent of tough lo labor-intensive and expensive as h more than a few local grape grow have let Turley know, she reports wry "that it's the stupidest thing they've e heard of." The proof, of course, w emerge from the bottle in a year's tin Meanwhile, so what if ravening bi helped themselves to half of Turle crop? A quarter ton of the best gra she's ever had to work with have be ever-so-gently destemmed and crush here at her brother's Turley Wi Cellars, and there are chardonnay gra to come. For one moment amid the s week spasm that is the wine-coun harvest, friends have gathered to ce brate Helen Turley's liberation. Af years of cajoling the growers who sup Marcassin, at last she can make wi from grapes of her own.

"There's something about a fi crop," observes Kari Worth, who turn Calistoga's Palisades Market into a g

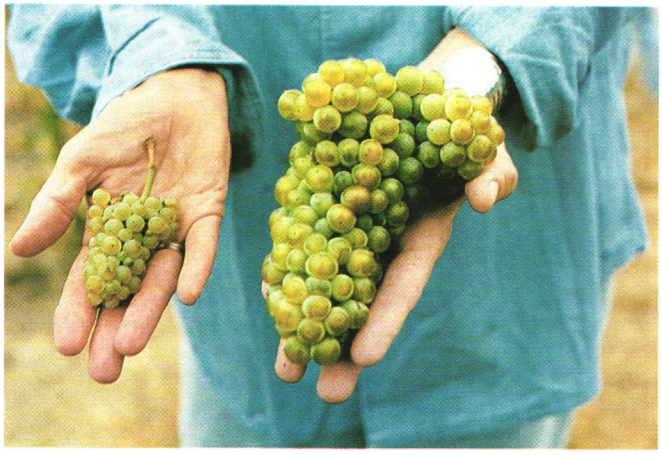
onome's playground and now runs the mpus store at the Culinary Institute America's new Napa Valley Greystone cility. Her husband, David Dennis, ıyer for the idiosyncratic wineshop at John Wetlaufer once presided over Calistoga's All Seasons restaurant, is ımersed in the wine-biz shoptalk that itters across the deck: who went oke, who bought whose equipment, e threats—many and awful!—to the ıe-wine trade. Oilman Bill Smith, on ıose elegant, single vineyard 1992 not noir Helen consulted, cuts to the ıase. "How much did you pick?" he in- ıires. "Three hundred and ninety-five ounds," Helen tells him th a tinge of rue. "This is ıen you say, 'Thank God ere are no investors,'" plies Smith (who's up to his eballs in them).

An aromatic ribbon of ood smoke snakes over om the industrial-strength ill on which Soho refugee ıomas Keller, whose French ıundry restaurant in Yount- le has put him into the first nk of Napa chefs, tends hemerally thin pizzas over ire of salvaged oak-barrel staves. Like herd of exotic flying saucers, the ackly disks land on deck in proces- on: one daubed with a hazelnut-col- ed melt of caramelized onion, briny ack drifts of ossetra caviar, cool ème fraîche; another bearing a soft, ld mince of wild mushrooms quilted th surprising rosy wheels of the fresh gs that are in season. A third shines mato-bright, its ratatouille inten- ied into a roasted, peppery paste. By eller's lights, this is casual, seat-of- e-pants food for friends, much re- oved from French Laundry's stylized ne-course dinners. "So many deci- ons," says Larry Turley, hovering with agnum in hand. "Yeah," gibes John Vetlaufer, sliding into their in-law htick. "Eat? Drink? Eat? Drink?"

As if on cue, David Dennis produces s scary-looking black "super-turbo ne opener": the time has come to eat d drink in earnest. On a long table set der a wisteria-choked pergola, solemn ttles wait like a silent party of guests, ut it quickly becomes apparent that some of them have slipped in uninvited. "It's an '82," people murmur disconcertedly as they sip the first white wine, a grand cru Corton-Charlemagne meant to serve as a point of comparison with Helen Turley's 1992 Marcassin chardonnay made of grapes bought from Gauer Vineyard "Upper Barn." "Old and tired," declares Larry Turley of the French wine; his wife, wine distributor Suzanne Chambers, disappears into the cellar to fetch the '92s they had intended to serve. "The English would say it's just entering its prime," jokes Ehren Jordan, the young Nantucketer who supervises Larry Turley's zinfandel operation. Merriment ensues on the wine peccadilloes of the Brits. The grilled sea bass that Keller has stuffed with crab ensues, too, in company with a pillowy vegetable tart—"spoon bread," Keller calls it rather perversely, its batter swelling into a soft crust that cradles a September vegetable kaleidoscope, from fennel and leeks to golden tomatoes and savoy cabbage.

Tasting the Marcassin Gauer Vineyard "Upper Barn," the point of the Corton-Charlemagne comparison becomes clear. A Helen Turley chardonnay, fermented with wild yeasts that have never seen the inside of a laboratory and then bottled unfiltered, has the resonance of the great white burgundies that have long been Turley's models. And it has the elusive power of place, of *terroir,* that informs the great French wines: the wine on the table, as David Dennis quickly exclaims, is very different from the chardonnay Turley makes from Hudson vineyard grapes. The Gauer is alive with nuance, luxurious and unfolding,





Marcassin's ridgetop Sonoma vineyard, above, the scene of Helen and John's first harvest of their own pinot noir and chardonnay grapes. Turley, left, holds a mature cluster of Marcassin's delicate chardonnay grapes in one hand and a bunch of the super-cloned monsters used for most California chardonnays in the other.

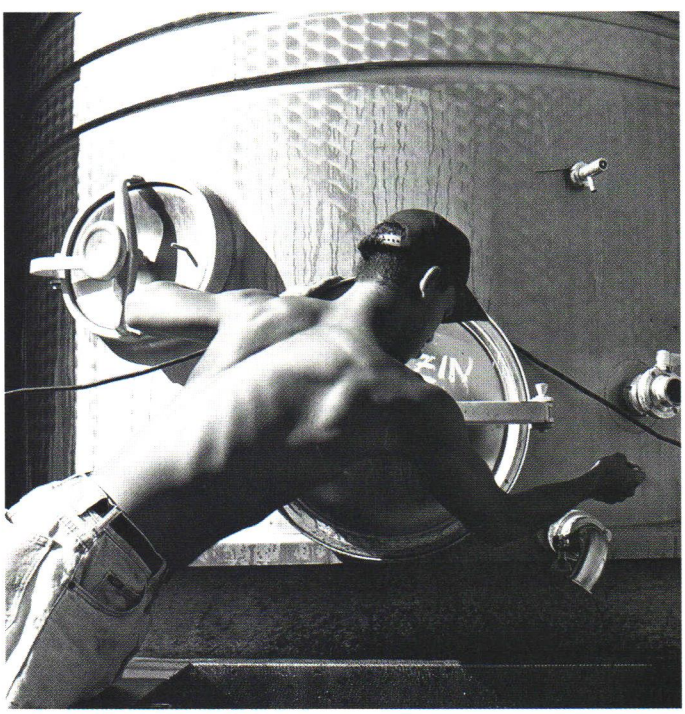


On harvest day, Turley inspects her diminutive pinot grapes for moisture to determine the optimum moment for picking. Grilled over a fire, pizza with caramelized onion, caviar, and crème fraîche, overleaf, acquires a certain *je ne sais quoi.*

flowery and expansive. It sticks around and engages in dialogue with your palate. It can banish uncharitable thoughts spawned by endless dreary California chardonnays. The fact that it is next to impossible to get (only six hundred cases are made, which go to a mailing list and selected restaurants in California and New York) seems less tragic if you view Marcassins as a benchmark, a promise of what California wines could be.

The Gauer is not, as Helen Turley is the first to admit, the easiest wine in the world to match with food. "It almost demands shellfish with a beautiful velouté," she says. "Anything sharp or acid kind of clashes." Suddenly the exquisite predicament of the Napa chef, ministering to so many wine-heads, crystallizes. But Keller's sea bass is a discreet, mannerly creature. Ehren Jordan, whose Nantucket home is sea bass territory, greets it like an old friend, spinning the first of the night's free-associative food soliloquies. He recounts the tale of the giant, handline-caught tuna that his stepbrother sold to the Japanese for $30,000; he reminisces about digging quahogs. Night noises have begun to simmer in the background. Frogs, explains Larry Turley, who cofounded the massively successful Frog's Leap Winery on this erstwhile frog farm in 1981, then sold it to his partner two years ago. "Frogs sold at 33 cents a dozen to San Francisco in the late 1800s," he reports cheerfully. "This morning I rescued three frogs underneath the wine barrels."

For a second that thin line between our farmyard friends and our dinner seems to waver. Then comes the grilled baby squab, only recently running free in Modesto, its gnarly claws tucked up as in supplication. The line wavers again—until the dark seductiveness of the meat kicks in, an irresistible, near-gravitational force buoyed by an autumnal gratin of beans: cranberry-speckled, flageolet-pale, alertly black-eyed. This is farm-raised game that still tastes of the wild, its skin deeply burnished from an anointment of EVO olive oil—local, unfiltered, profoundly fruity stuff that sits patriotically on all the high-toned Valley market shelves at 20 bucks per hyper-designed bottle. The squab triggers the evening's red-wine phase. Suzanne Chambers and David Dennis bend their heads over a 1987 Richebourg burgundy, murmuring the name of Mme. Gros, the vintner, in near-prayerful tones. Dennis rises to pour from the bottle as if it contained liquid platinum. The guests are growing proprietary



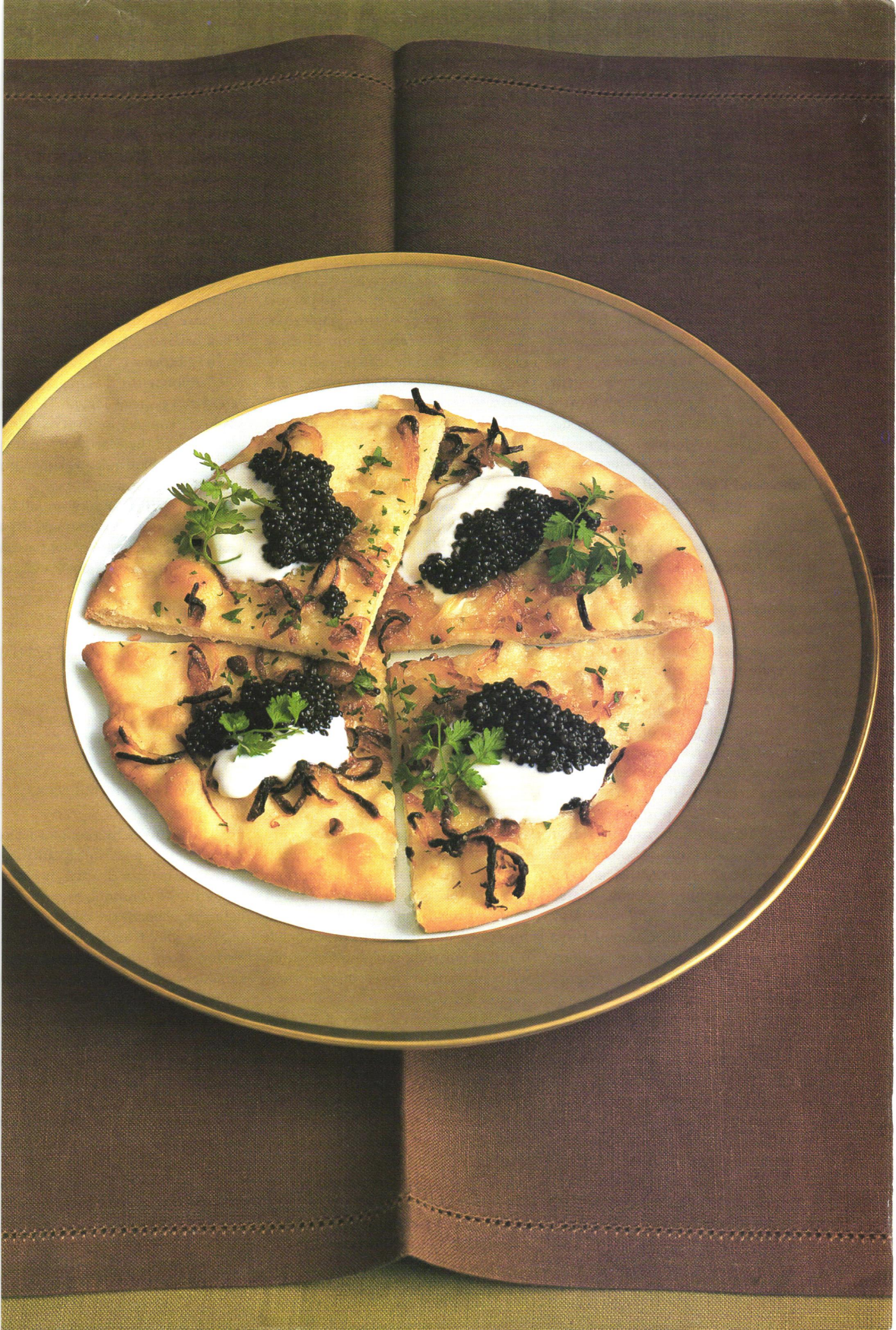
At Turley Wine Cellars, wine making is as physical as it is cerebral, from planting to directing the fermentation process.

and boisterously jocular about bottle placement: "See what happens?" Larry Turley declaims as Jordan snags the Richebourg. "You put it here and you kiss it goodbye." At the head of the table, Helen Turley inclines her long and authoritative nose—an instrument that seems made for exploring the axiom that 80 percent of what we taste is based on smell—deep into her crystal glass, probing the aromas of her 1987 Marcassin pinot noir. If the Richebourg is velvet, the Marcassin is fine, soft linen, drier of finish, its conversation with the squab a more two-sided affair.

Symmetrically enough, it was on just such a game-and-pinot-noir evening eleven years ago that Helen and John discovered a site with the traits of great Burgundian vineyards tl revered. In an old hotel on the Sono Coast, they met a man who invited th to a wild-pig roast at a winery back the muscular, fir-fringed ridges. "It one of those food and wine synerg that gets everyone jazzed forev Wetlaufer recalls. They liked the wi that had been produced in the region many years. Not long after, they bou the vertiginous 40-acre parcel tha Marcassin (French for "young wild p in honor of that mom tous dinner party. Here classic southeast expos to catch the sun an 1,200-foot elevation ab the Pacific fog line, c enough to fall within narrow daily temperat range that pinot noir chardonnay like, wa enough to ward off ruin freezes. There were two teresting soils with a some hillside drainage was just the spot for Hel French-inspired planti free of the sprawly, verd "California flop" gro that typifies most of state's vineyards. Inde with its vines undulating the slopes in tight, di plined file, Marcassin the symmetry and order of a well- schoolroom—an oddly festive o glinting with foil ribbons that ra crisply in Helen's beloved ocean "z phyrs," warning away the heedl birds. The small-lot wine making t will come from its first meter- meter vintage (a barrel each of pi and chardonnay) is, as Wetlau points out, experimental in natu "but we'll get some information."

"Now," says Helen of their beaut and difficult site, "we'll see what we h got."

At the far end of the table, Chamb and Dennis can't stop talking ab Richebourgs past and present. "I had softer '78s," insists Dennis. T vanish into the cellar and reapp holding two bottles as if they were n born babies. "This wine you gotta p real carefully . . . there's stuff in



Feast for a First Harvest

Dennis announces. All around him, rogue pourings are breaking out. Bill Smith wants Helen to weigh in on his just-bottled '94 pinot noir. Larry Turley is itching to unleash some of his own zinfandels, newly touted by *Wine Spectator*, for which Helen served as wine maker (an arrangement that ceased with the 1996 vintage). "Let's open some of these puppies," he exhorts Jordan. In the midst of this free-for-all, a cheese course materializes—to Jordan's glee. "I'm a cheese slut!" he confesses loudly. "What's the really strong one?" Larry asks Kari Worth. "Pont-l'Evêque," she ventures; they debate the chalky square in the middle. Morbier? "So the cheese course came around and I ate a third of a pound," Jordan is saying. The words "salt pork" float though the air, disembodied.

Chastely dressed salads of frilly greens throw the cheeses into sharp relief, and Keller's trademark compotes—figs in port; green tomatoes with raisins—sharpen the focus even further. Best of all are the tiny tomatoes that are one of the foremost amenities of Napa and Sonoma life. They are small explosions of lush, edgy sweetness, a testament to the network of organic-produce growers that evolved in northern California, post-Alice Waters. Along with the squab and that EVO olive oil, they are as good an index as any to the area's distinctive food culture. "We're spoiled," admits Worth with a satisfied air. And why not? Where else can you drive around with a box of esoterically hued cherry tomatoes on the front seat of your car, popping them like bonbons?

Larry Turley is telling about the fried wisteria he and Suzanne ate in Italy ("They kept pointing out the window when we asked what it was") when Joan Smith, Bill's wife, rises to offer a toast to Helen and John. "They deserve everything they're getting," she says feelingly. "They've worked so hard. They've lived so meagerly. We love your success!" she finishes, raising her glass. It is a freighted, galvanic moment met by a wave of wineglasses and affirmative sounds. "Meagerly is right," jokes Helen, clearly touched. After two decades in the business, including a long apprenticeship doing physically grueling cellar work, she is only now, in her early fifties, coming into her own. The couple has pinched pennies and lived like graduate students here in the land of the lotus-eaters; they have rented the same modest Calistoga apartment since 1981. Its contrast with her brother's regal digs, vine-clad pergola and all, is just one of the complexities that makes the relationship of these two blond, grandly scaled, and laughter-prone siblings as interesting as a Marcassin wine.

Only when "the puissant Robert Parker" (as Wetlaufer calls the influential publisher of the *Wine Advocate*) went nuts for Turley's wines several years ago did her consulting business take off. It was not until 1990 that she and Wetlaufer could afford to make their first pilgrimage to France. Now, "an overnight success after twenty years," as her husband puts it dryly, she can afford to choose her projects and decline those that don't offer enough control over details. And she has the wherewithal to devote to the couple's manifest mission: nudging California wines forward by the example of their own work.

They don't need to worry about selling their wine; it's already sold. ("It's dogs with a meat pie trying to allocate these scarce wines," says Helen, who had to quit answering her phone when Robert Parker printed her number.) Even when they finally build their own small winery up at Marcassin, they plan to hold production to a maximum of two thousand cases—probably the most a wine maker can do and still taste every barrel. But they look forward to a less-standardized time when Califo growers care more about flavor t yield; when cosmetic filtration and use of boring lab yeasts will not be tomatic; when hillside plantings meter-by-meter vines will not be jud quixotic. They see the state's phyllox crisis, in which a pernicious root lo has forced massive replantings, as a nal opportunity for growers to re cover the old-fashioned, shy-bear French rootstocks that produce sm er, more intensely flavored gra Their belief that "the next step in q ity in California is this kind of viti ture" amounts to a Marcassin gos "good news," grins Helen. "This vi yard isn't a model for everybody," Wetlaufer of the Marcassin. "But it model if you have a site where it's po ble to grow great wine."

There is still a voluptuous fall m of tarte tatin to be consumed, its t crème fraîche commenting on ear bound burnt sugar. There is a cigare

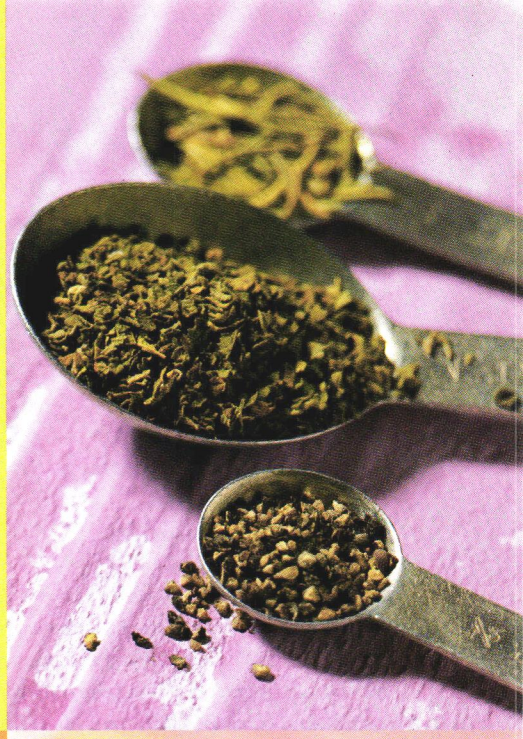
Helen Turley's chardonnay, fermente with wild yeasts that have never seen the inside of a lab and then bottled unfiltered, has the resonance of the great white burgundies that have long been her mode

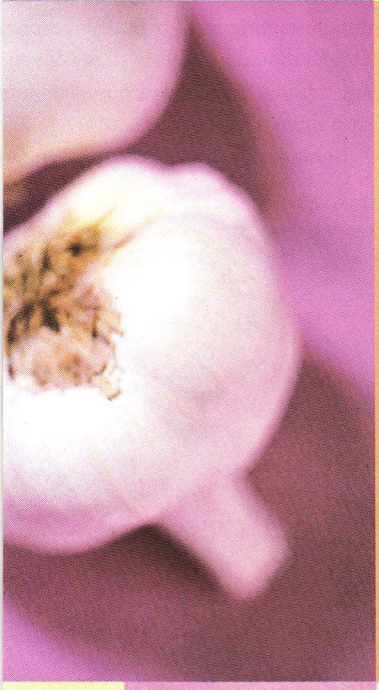
break to be stolen by a couple of gue Helen being notoriously unable taste wine even in the presence of p fume. In the consoling halo of canc light that cocoons the table, the trir of food and friends and wine t Turley treasures has worked transfigurative alchemy, the hum equivalent of the fermentation proc she speaks of with such passion. Talk Egyptian crypts and the late Ti Meat Market and sightings of mo tain lions circulates amid the frog cl rus. And when her guests dispe into the navy blue night through brother's olive grove, they have take species of communion.

Alison Cook, *a winner of the James Be Foundation's M.F.K. Fisher Award, is a Hous based journalist who frequently writes on food.*



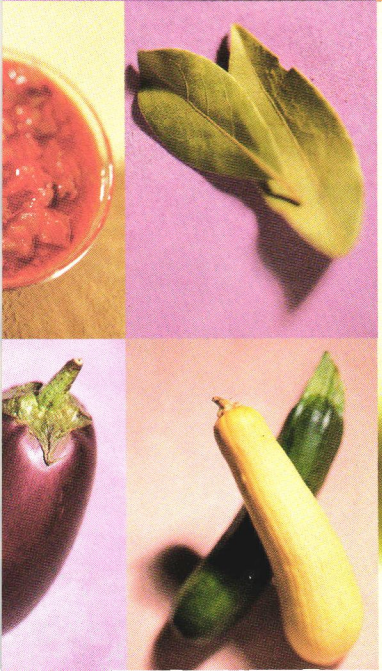
It's easy to improvise with pork. ❧ *Sauté or broil cutlets for sandwiches. (Try different marinades—like Italian salad dressing, teriyaki sauce, even olive oil and orange juice—you get the idea.)* ❧ *For burritos, fill flour tortillas with stir-fried pork strips, taco seasoning, onion and bell pepper plus chiles, cheese, lettuce or whatever.* ❧ *Sprinkle chops with garlic powder (oregano and lemon-pepper, too, if you like) and sauté in olive oil. Serve with pasta and veggies. For more great ideas, write us. Or just open your cupboard. Send a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope to: Recipes Ad, Box 10383, Des Moines, IA 50306. Or visit us at http://www.nppc.org/*





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GRILLED PIZZA

WITH CARAMELIZED ONIONS, CRÈME FRAÎCHE AND OSSETRA CAVIAR

(MAKES 8 INDIVIDUAL PIZZAS)

PIZZA DOUGH

- 1 package dry yeast
- 1 1/2 cups lukewarm water
- 3 1/2 to 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tsps salt
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

DISSOLVE THE YEAST in water. Combine 3 1/2 cups flour with the salt on work surface. Make a well and add the yeast mixture and olive oil. Knead the dough 5 to 8 minutes until smooth and no longer sticky, adding additional 1/2 cup flour as needed. Place the dough in a large oiled bowl. Cover with a towel and put in a warm place for 2 to 3 hours or until the dough has doubled.

PIZZA TOPPING

- 3 large Spanish onions
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 1/2 cups crème fraîche
- 8 ozs Ossetra or other good-quality caviar
- Chervil or flat-leaf parsley for garnish

PEEL AND SLICE the onions into thin rounds. In a 12" sauté pan, melt butter over medium heat, then add onions. Sauté for 6 to 7 minutes until onions soften, then place the pan on a heat diffuser and cook very slowly for 45 minutes or so, stirring occasionally.

To assemble pizzas

REMOVE DOUGH from the bowl, punch down and divide into 8 even balls. Flatten each ball on a lightly floured surface and roll or stretch into a thin 8" round. Place the rounds on a lightly floured tray. Cover with a towel and let the dough rest 20 minutes.

To grill pizzas

PREPARE THE COALS by letting them burn down until they are evenly covered with white ash, but still quite hot. Spray the grill rack with a nonstick vegetable spray. Brush olive oil on both sides of pizza and grill dough directly on the rack for approximately 1 minute. Turn and grill for another minute, then remove to a cutting board. Repeat with remaining dough.

Quarter each pizza. Spread with 1/4 cup onions, a generous tablespoon of crème fraîche, and spoon caviar onto each slice. Garnish with herbs.

To bake pizzas

PREHEAT OVEN TO 450°; place dough on a pizza stone and brush with olive oil and season with salt; prick dough with fork and spread with 1/4 cup onions; bake 8 to 10 minutes; quarter and spoon on dollops of crème fraîche and a teaspoon of caviar. Garnish.

VEGETABLE SPOONBREAD

(SERVES 8-10)

BRIOCHE DOUGH

- 2 packages dried yeast
- 1/2 cup warm milk
- 3 sticks sweet butter, cut into 24 pieces
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 4 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp salt
- 4 large eggs
- 2 large egg yolks

DISSOLVE YEAST in warm milk.

Place cold butter between two shee plastic wrap. Tap pieces lightly with a ro pin to make them pliable. Set aside.

Combine dry ingredients in the bo an electric mixer.

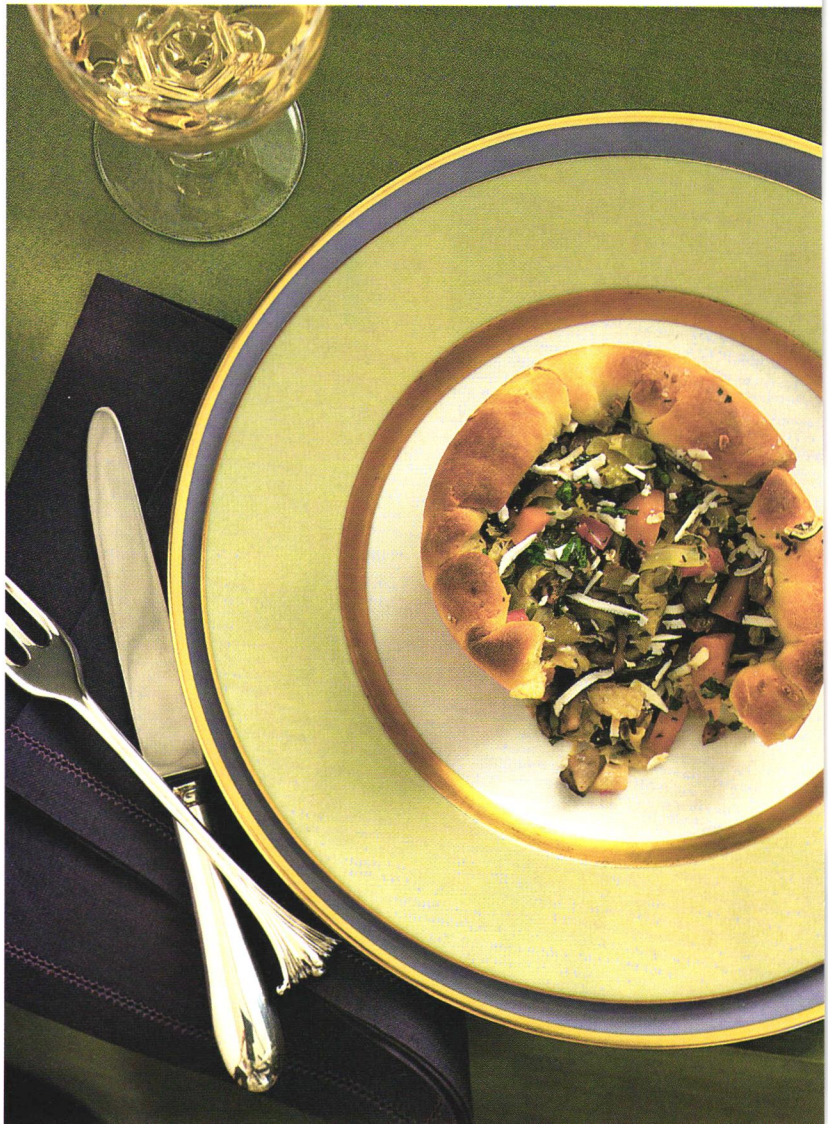
In a separate bowl, whisk together yolks, and yeast mixture.

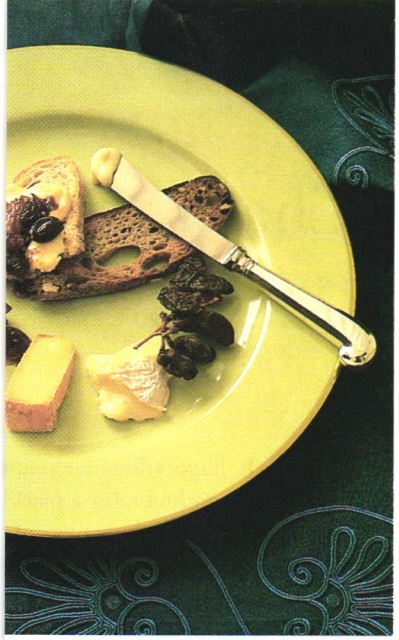
Using the paddle attachment on a speed, add the eggs and yeast mixture t dry ingredients and combine thoroughl

Add butter, two pieces at a time, t dough, mixing until it is all incorpora Dough should be slightly sticky. If you any crumbs, add a few drops of milk t sorb them. Do not overbeat!

Remove dough from the bowl and w

SPOONBREAD À LA KELLER: VEGETABLES IN A SOFT CUSHION OF BRIO





THROWN INTO FOCUS BY FRUIT
S ARE A KELLER TRADEMARK.

ll amount of flour knead a few times to
ke sure the butter is mixed in. Put the
gh in a large buttered bowl. Cover with
wel and let rise at room temperature for
urs. Punch down, cover and refrigerate.

OONBREAD FILLING

3 tbsp olive oil
1 fennel bulb, core removed, thinly sliced
1/2 small savoy cabbage, thinly sliced
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
2 zucchini, diced
3 carrots, peeled and diced
1 celery stalk, peeled and diced
1 leek, sliced into 1/4" rounds
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 red peppers, seeded and diced
1 cup chicken or vegetable stock
1/2 cup dry white wine
bouquet garni of bay leaf, 4 sprigs of parsley and thyme
Salt and pepper to taste
2 tbsp sweet butter
2 cups assorted mushrooms, roughly chopped
1/2 cup grated Parmigiano Reggiano
1/4 cup mixed fresh herbs (sage, rosemary, oregano, thyme), chopped

EHEAT OVEN TO 325°. In a large
té pan, bring the olive oil to a high heat.
d fennel, cabbage, onion, zucchini, car-
s, celery, leek, and garlic, and sauté until
t, 5 minutes or so. Add the red peppers,
ck, and wine, and bring to boil. Add the
uquet garni, salt and pepper, and simmer
etables until the liquid has almost evap-
ted. Remove and cool.

In a large sauté pan over medium heat melt butter. Add mushrooms, salt, and sauté quickly. Add the mushrooms to the vegetables. Season with salt and pepper.

Remove dough from the refrigerator and punch down.

Flour counter surface lightly and roll brioche dough to a 13" circle. Refrigerate dough for 1/2 hour. Spray a 9" iron skillet with a nonstick vegetable spray. Remove dough from refrigerator and press firmly into the skillet. Add the vegetable filling. Dough should peek over the top of the vegetables. Fold the edges of the dough in toward the skillet.

Sprinkle 1/4 cup grated Parmigiano Reggiano evenly over top.

Bake for 30-35 minutes or until the crust pulls away from the pan and is golden brown. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and herbs.

GRILLED SQUAB SERVED WITH A BEAN GRATIN

(SERVES 8-10)

8 to 10 whole squab
(substitute poussin or Cornish hen)

DRY MARINADE

1 cinnamon stick
2 dried bay leaves
Salt and pepper

Olive oil to coat squab

SQUAB SPICE

2 tbsp ground allspice
2 tbsp ground white peppercorns
2 tbsp ground cinnamon.

GRIND TOGETHER marinade ingredients. Rub olive oil and marinade on squab. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate six hours or overnight.

Preheat oven to 400°. Remove the squab and brush lightly with olive oil. Place on a baking sheet. Sprinkle with the squab spice mixture and bake for 10 minutes, reduce heat to 350° and bake for 20 minutes.

Remove squab from the oven and let rest for five minutes before carving. Slice in quarters and serve with bean gratin.

BEAN GRATIN

1 cup each of these dried beans:
Pinto beans
Black-eyed peas
Flageolets or cranberry beans
1/4 lb smoked bacon, cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices
2 cups tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and quartered
1 1/2 quarts chicken stock

BOUQUET GARNI

Green stem of one leek, parsley, 2 bay leaves, thyme

BRUNOISE

1 tbsp olive oil
2 carrots, 1 onion, and 3 celery stalks, all peeled and diced

SOAK THE BEANS in water to cover for 6 hours. Preheat oven to 325°. Bring 8 quarts of water to a boil and cook the beans for 2 minutes. Remove and plunge into an ice bath.

Blanch the bacon and slice pieces in half.

Blanch the leek. Tie with thyme, parsley, and bay leaves into bouquet garni.

Place the beans, tomatoes, bouquet garni, and smoked bacon in a 4-quart stockpot. Add chicken stock and bring to a simmer.

Cover and bake for 45 minutes.

To prepare the brunoise, heat a skillet over medium-low heat. Add the olive oil and vegetables and cook slowly until the vegetables are soft. During the last 10 minutes of cooking the beans, stir in the brunoise.

Remove the beans from the oven and serve with the squab.

PEAR CONFIT

(MAKES 3 1/2 CUPS)

SACHET

4 allspice berries
4 whole cloves
1 3-inch cinnamon stick

8 Anjou pears, peeled, cored and diced
1 red pepper, diced
1 red onion, minced
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup white wine vinegar

WRAP INGREDIENTS for sachet in a piece of cheesecloth and tie with string.

Place remaining ingredients and sachet in an 8-quart stockpot. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer on a diffuser, stirring occasionally, for 45 minutes to 1 hour or until liquid has evaporated. Remove sachet. Serve with cheeses.

New Hope for the Lowly Chard

ONCE THE SHARK REPELLENT OF VIN ORDINAIRE, AMERICAN CHARDONNAY IS DEVELOPING AN IMPRESSIVE PROFILE

BY JAY McINERNEY



PHOTOGRAPH BY LISA CHARLES WATSON

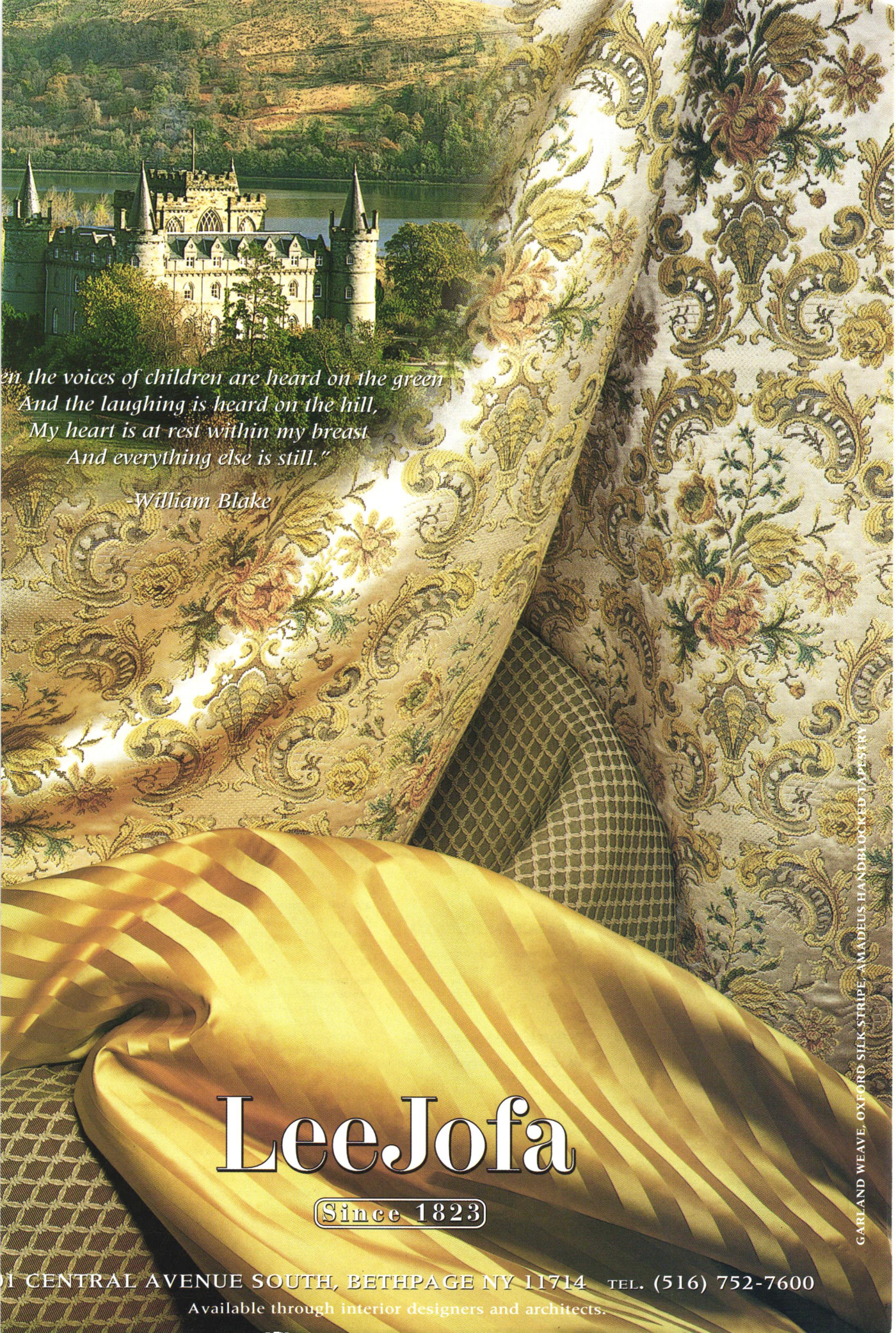
WHEN MY EDITOR TOLD me that I could write about anything I wanted in my first column so long as it was chardonnay I thought briefly about killing her. In the years since chardonnay has become a virtual brand name I've grown sick to death of hearing my waiter say, "We have a nice chardonnay." The "house" chard in most restaurants usually tastes like some laboratory synthesis of lemon and sugar. If, on the other hand, you order off the top of the list, you may get something that tastes like five pounds of melted butter churned in fresh-cut oak.

Until recently, the more expensive California chardonnays tended to resemble the women of *Playboy* and Beverly Hills: the homogeneous voluptuosity often had more to do with technology than with nature. Don't get me wrong, I have nothing against blondes with huge silicone-enhanc breasts. And likewise there's undoubtably a place big, heavily oaked, in-your-face chardonnays. But oenologists who were graduating from the Univers of California at Davis in the seventies and fann out around Napa and Sonoma seemed to have a s gle palate amongst them, and to be aiming to cre the vinous equivalent of Chesty Morgan, regardl of the raw materials at their disposal. *Throw in t taric acid and yeast and then filter the shit out of it, du*

In the eighties, despairing of the domestic pr uct and in lieu of investing in the stock marke would buy the occasional bottle of white burgun It's produced in France and is, in fact, made fr the chardonnay grape, although the label on a given bottle bears the name of the piece of grou that nurtured the grape rather than the gra itself: Meursault, Puligny-Montrachet, Pouil Fuissé, and Chablis are all regions. In burgundy, t allegedly key element of wine personality is the *roir*, which translates into American as "location, cation, location," or, alternately, "dirt." And Burgundy every other half acre, practically, i different region. This profusion of appellations, n to mention the abundance of proprietors within ea appellation—added to the fact that the weather fr year to year in Burgundy is less reliable than in t Napa Valley—is what makes burgundy, white and r so difficult to get a handle on, and what leads ma New World drinkers to stick to domestic product.

What seemed to me to make white burgund worth the effort was the fact that they tended have more character, to be better balanced, mo elegant . . . how you say in English . . . more Isabelle Adja More *Jules and Jim* than *Die Hard;* less top-heavy and mo food-friendly than New World wines. On the other hand was and is quite possible to spend forty bucks on a bot that tastes like it has been barrel-fermented with a big clu of *terroir,* or with Pierre's old socks, or possibly his form cat. Yikes! Rather too much character, *mon cher.*

Fortunately there is a new generation of California wi makers who seem to be taking lessons from burgundy wi out slavishly imitating the Froggy product. What they have common is dedication to low vineyard yields, natural yeas French oak, little or no added acid, and little or no filtrati But for those of us who don't make wine and don't really u derstand how the hell it is made, what these California wi


en the voices of children are heard on the green
And the laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast
And everything else is still."
-William Blake
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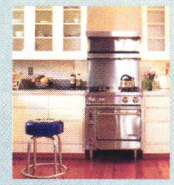
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have in abundance is character and elegance, along with some of that power that California is notorious for.

Leading the new wave is wine maker Helen Turley, who advises half a dozen of the top California makers and bottles one of the best white wines in the world under her Marcassin label; she happily cops to admiring and emulating the white burgundies of France's renowned Michel Niellon. A recent trip to Sonoma, tasting chards including Turley's and those of Steve Ryan at Martinelli Vineyards, nearly converted this California skeptic. And a subsequent tasting organized by *House & Garden* and Geraldine Tashjian of the Burgundy Wine Company suggests that California and Burgundy are no longer worlds apart when it comes to their treatment of the chardonnay grape. Blind-tasting five similarly priced pairs of 1992 burgundies and 1993 chardonnays was instructive: first of all, it was not always a cinch to identify which was which. I was inclined to think, for instance, that Kistler Vine Hill—matched against the Olivier Leflaive Puligny-Montrachet Champs Gains—was the Frog, given its lighter body, bright acidity, and slightly grassy taste. I was also surprised to find that two out of my three favorite wines in the tasting were from California—an opinion that was pretty general among the seven tasters. Helen Turley's rare 1993 Marcassin Hudson Vineyard, like crème brûlée in a glass, was my personal favorite, followed by the 1993 Talbott Sleepy Hollow Vineyard, which I found surprisingly elegant and complex, given my memory of earlier Talbotts as unsubtle and oaky.

I'm changing my mind about California. The movies are getting louder and dumber, but the wines seem to be going the other way.

Jay McInerney *is a novelist whose most recent book is* The Last of the Savages *(Random House). His wine column will appear regularly.*



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Sources

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WELCOME, PAGE 29 Hair/makeup by Genevieve for Laura Mercier Classique.

A LOT OF HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS, PAGES 32, 37 Hair/makeup and grooming by Marina Vance.

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Styled by Masha Calloway. **page 77, Vacuum,** Electrolux. 800-243-2886. **Isaac's own pajamas,** Turnbull & Asser Ltd., London, England. 44-171-930-0502. **pages 78-79, Red canister vacuum,** by Achille Castiglioni and Pier Giacomo, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. **Miele canister vacuum,** The White Pearl #S434i, $699. 800-694-4868. **Sharp upright,** Twin Energy #EC-T-4660, $399.99, Sharp Electronics Corp. 800-BE-SHARP. **Hoover upright,** Power Drive #U6329930, $449, The Hoover Company. Consult local yellow pages. **Hoover canister,** Futura #S3569, $289.95. **Eureka upright,** The Boss #1934, $59.99, The Eureka Company. 800-282-2886. **Eureka upright,** Sanitaire Heavy Duty #8661, $250. **page 82, Hand-painted TV console, wall hanging, and chalices,** Holly Solomon Gallery, 172 Mercer St., NYC 10012. 212-941-5777. **page 84, Tulipa Angélique,** $5.95/six bulbs, White Flower Farm, PO Box 50, Litchfield, CT 06759. 800-503-9624. **Netherlands Flower Bulb Information Center.** 718-596-5400. **Book-cloth and calfskin lamp,** Aero, 132 Spring St., NYC 10012. 212-966-1500. **Bud vase,** by Jonathan Adler, porcelain, Seed Inc., 76 Greene St., NYC 10012. 212-226-0976. **Table, pillows, and bed,** Studio Sofield Inc., 25 E. 4th St., #1, NYC 10003. 212-473-1300. **page 86, RapidFire Chimney Starter,** #87886, aluminized steel, $14.99, Weber-Stephen Products Co. 800-446-1071. **Cooking grate,** from Weber Master Touch Kettle #7792477400, $199.99, Gracious Home, 1217 Third Ave., NYC 10021. 212-517-6300. **Chimney starter,** #3001, sheet metal, $14.95, Charcoal Companion, Inc./Artex, 800-521-0505, in CA call 510-632-2100. **Bench,** Tisch 1996, $2,500, Andrea Rosen Gallery, 130 Prince St., NYC 10012. 212-941-0203. **page 88, Ottoman,** George Smith Sofas & Chairs, Inc., 73 Spring St., NYC 10012. 212-226-4747. **Tray,** #15131, sycamore, $200, Calvin Klein Home. 800-294-7978. **Champagne flutes,** Albi, crystal, $50/pair, Christofle, 800-806-7540. **Candleholder,** Artu, crystal, $26, Rogaska, 685 Madison Ave., NYC 10021. 800-680-2440. **Champagne bucket,** sterling , $895, Takashimaya, 693 Fifth Ave., NYC 10022. 800-753-2038. **page 90, Salt and peppers,** all in sterling, from Tiffany & Co., 800-526-0649. **Ceramic crock,** by Robinson Ransbottom Pottery Co., $20, Fishs Eddy, 889 Broadway, NYC 10003. 212-420-9020. **Arborio rice,** $2.39-$2.49 for a 2-lb bag, Lundberg Family Farms, PO Box 369, Richvale, CA 95974. 916-882-4551. **Napkin,** Fleur de Lys, cotton, $6/each, ABC Carpet & Home, 888 Broadway, NYC 10003. 212-473-3000. **pages 92, 96, St. Michel lamps,** amber, glass & iron, $149. **Cinni fan,** steel body and brass blades, $129; **Palladium bed,** in dark walnut, full, $799; **couch,** cotton velvet slipcover, $1,299; **magazine coffee table,** hand-forged iron, $299; **Astoria lamp,** forged iron with antique finish, $119; **wool rug,** $329, all from Pottery Barn, 800-922-5507.

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McFeely's, PO Box 11169, Lynchburg, VA 24506-1169. 800-443-7937.

DIG IT, PAGES 156-165 White Flower Farm. 800-503-9624.

HOME BASE, PAGES 176-184
Architect and designer, Architecture + Furniture, 167 Chambers St., NYC 10007. 212-619-5944. Hair/makeup by Maria Verel for The Clive Salon. **pages 176-178, Leather bench, table and chairs with rush seats, and chapel bench,** Tim Gleason Gallery, 77 Sullivan St., NYC 10012. 212-966-5777. **Sofas,** B&B Italia, 150 E. 58th St., NYC 10158. 212-758-4046. **Frieze wallcovering,** Raindrop Enrichment, custom-colored, $17/yd, Bradbury & Bradbury, PO Box 155, Benicia, CA 94510. 707-746-1900. **Wool rug,** Stark Carpet Corporation. 212-752-9000. Available through architects and designers. **page 180, Kitchen sink,** Belfast, by Shaws, European Country Cooking Ltd., PO Box 154, Oldwick, NJ 08858. 800-882-5339. **Table and chairs,** Architecture + Furniture. **page 182, Club chairs,** 800-DONGHIA. **page 184, Bed,** designed by Furnau & Hartman Architects, 2512 9th St., #2, Berkeley, CA 94710. 510-848-4480.

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Jed Johnson & Associates, Inc., 211 61st St., NYC 10023. 212-489-7840. Flowers by Wolfgang Thom for D Floral. 212-463-8091. All fabrics an rugs are available through architec and designers only. **pages 274-275,** Julian Schnabel, photolithography woodcut etching and seriograph, Prints, 32 E. 57th St., NYC 10022. 2 421-3237. **Swedish arm chairs wit painted finish,** upholstered in br raw silk, A. Smith Antiques, 235 E. 60th St., NYC 10022. 212-777-8209 Available through architects and designers. **Sultanabad,** Darius Antique and Decorative Arts, 38 E 57th St., NYC 10022. 212-777-8209. Available through architects and designers. **page 277, Venini glass,** Donzella, 90 E. 10th St., NYC 100 212-598-9675 and Gardner & Barr, Inc., 213 E. 60th St., NYC 10022, 21 355-6031. **page 278-279, painting,** Richmond Burton, Barbara Gladst Gallery, 99 Greene St., NYC 10012 212-431-3334. **Photograph,** by Wa Neidich, 1991, Steffany Martz Gall 580 Broadway, Rm. 707, NYC 100 212-334-3348. **Side table by sofa,** hand-woven in the Philippines, Tu Robbins, 330 E. 59th St., NYC 100 212-644-3770. **Regency-style tabl** Hyde Park Antiques, Ltd., 836 Broadway, NYC 10003. 212-477-00 **Fabric on dining chairs,** Aquariu weave, Lee Jofa, 201 Central Park So., Bethpage, NY 11714. **Venetian glass chandelier,** Reymer-Jourdan Antiques, 43 E. 10th St., NYC 1000 212-674-4470. **Urns,** Niall Smith Antiques, 96 Grand St., NYC 1001 212-941-7354. **pages 280-281, Dressing table,** Louis Bofferding. 212-744-6725. **Drawings** by Brice

rden, Barbara Gladstone Gallery, Greene St., NYC 10012. 212-431-4. **pages 282-283, Stove,** VGRC , stainless steel, Viking Range rporation, 111 Front St., enwood, MS 38930. 601-455-1200. **ks,** by Crane, porcelain with repro-tion brushed-nickel legs, Urban haeology, 285 Lafayette St., NYC 12. 212-431-6969. **Bathtub,** estro Bath Whirlpool, cast-iron, hler Co. 800-KOHLER.

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throom fixtures, Howard Kaplan tiques, 827 Broadway, NYC 10003 -674-1000; Terra Designs, PO Box 49 Rte. 202 South, Far Hills, NJ 931. 908-234-0440. **Moulding,** enhardt Mills Inc., 1510 Richmond ., Easton, PA 18040. 610-253-2791. **razzo,** Port Morris Tile & Marble rporation, 1285 Oak Point Ave., nx, NY 10474. 718-378-6100. ailable through architects and igners. **Draperies,** Caribbean, lamandré, 942 3rd Ave., NYC 10022. -980-3888; **lining,** Vincennes, vers, 979 3rd Ave., NYC 10022. 212-7900. **Wool bouclé,** Marquis, rgamo Fabrics Inc., 979 3rd Ave., C 10022. 212-888-3333. **Jansen te,** Hemisphere, 173 Fulham Rd., 3, London, England. 44-171-581-0. **Upholstery,** Shan, sandstone ae, silk, Larsen, 233 Spring St., NYC 13. 212-462-1300. **Sofa slipcover,** langa Paw, cotton/linen. **Draperies,** irl, wool/silk, all from Sabina Fay xton, Paris. 33-1-46-57-11-62. **ning room draperies,** Christopher rman Inc., 41 W. 25th St., NYC 10. 212-647-0303. **Bedspread and ngings,** Chelsea Editions, 232 E. h, NYC 10022. 212-758-0005. ailable through architects and igners. **Curtains,** Gretchen linger, 31 Ontario St., Cohoes, NY 47. 518-235-2828. Available through hitects and designers. **Plaid,** umacher, 800-332-3384. **Carpet,** rsehair/linen. James Gould, 22 ckfield Ln., Greenwich, CT 06831. 3-629-1440.

NTER STAGE, PAGES 286-293

owers by Philip Baloun Designs, 340 55th St., NYC 10019. 212-307-1675. air/makeup by Maria Verel for The ve Salon. **pages 286-289, Chair brics,** Grifone, silk/cotton damask. ailable through architects and signers. **Vases and ginger jars,** rcelain, Daphne Rankin Antiques, 8 Kings Rd., SW6 2DX, London, gland. 44-171-384-1847. **Apple rush atting,** by Waveney Apple Growers, gland, 44-150-26-77-345, through ark Carpet Corporation, 212-752-00. Available through architects and signers. **White wood chandelier,** thony Outred, 533 Kings Rd., SW10, ndon, England. 44-171-352-8840. **ge turner and magnifying glass,** d Town Crossing, 82 Main St., uthampton, NY 11968. 516-283-40. **pages 290-291, Mirror,** Hervé um jardin et antiquités, 19, 19 bis, 19 ter, rue Petite Fusterie, 84000, Avignon France. 33-90-86-37. **Bed linens,** E. Braun & Co., 717 Madison Ave., NYC 10021. 800-372-7286.

DESERT SWANK, PAGES 294-307

pages 294-295, Lounge chair, Barcelona, leather and steel, $6,863, Knoll, 1235 Water St., East Greenville, PA 18041. 800-445-5045. **pages 296-297,** Hair/makeup by Lori Guidros for Rex. **Persian lamp,** similar items at Iron & Antiques Accents, 342 North La Brea, Los Angeles, CA 90036, 213-934-3953; Paul Ferrante, Inc., 8464 Melrose Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90069. 213-653-6504. **pages 298-299, Sofa fabric,** Caravan, cotton velvet; and **bedspread,** Magnum, cotton/vinyl/nylon/polyester (both discontinued), Larsen, 233 Spring St., NYC 10013. 212-462-1300. **Chairs,** fiberglass and steel, $1,164, Knoll, 1235 Water St., East Greenville, PA 18041. 800-445-5045. **pages 306-307, Sofas, ottomans, side table,** by George Nelson for Herman Miller, steel and cotton, $2,400, Bill Reed, 6671 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90028. 213-461-8875. **Coffee table,** Barcelona, by Mies van der Rohe, steel and glass, $2,263, Knoll. **Car,** Jaguar XKE B12, 1974, $39,900, Exotic Motor Cars, 4525 E. Ramon Rd., Palm Springs, CA 92264. 619-778-5444.

THE COUNTRY SIDE OF LIFE, PAGES 308-317 Unless noted, all items from Wolfman-Gold & Good Company, 117 Mercer St., NYC 10012. 212-966-7055. **page 308, Doorstops,** $125-$300. **Folding chair,** 1930, Ruby Beets, PO Box 596, Wainscott, NY 11975. 516-537-2802. **pages 310-311, Tables and cupboards,** $150–$2,000, Ruby Beets. **Armchairs,** down-blend fill, slipcovered in cotton denim, $900–$2,000; **sofas,** down-blend fill, slipcovered in Hopsak, $1,250–$2,500, by Mitchell Gold. **pages 312-313, Stove,** VGRC 485, stainless steel, Viking Range Corporation, 111 Front St., Greenwood, MS 38930. 601-455-1200. **Baskets,** $85; **antique cake stand,** $125; **ironstone pitchers and serving pieces,** Ruby Beets. **pages 314-315, Three-quarter-size iron beds,** from $550, Ruby Beets. **Lamps,** $130. **Gold-leaf antique mirrors,** $500–$1,200. **Four-poster bed,** from $3,500; **chenille pillow cases,** $100; **queen-size chenille bedspread,** $350; **muslin curtains,** $10/yd, 54"w, made to order. **Bed linens,** Ralph Lauren Home Collection, 212-642-8700.

GREEN LINKS, PAGES 318-323 On location at Tamcrest Golf Course, Alpine, NJ. Hair by Patrick Melville for MCM Salon NYC. Makeup by Sandrine Van Slee for Makeup Forever at Nordstroms. **page 318, Calico Corners,** La Poeme and Samba, 100% cotton, $12.99/yd, 800-777-9933. **Zimmer+Rohde,** Nomen, 80% cotton/20% viscose, $112/yard, 979 3rd Ave., NYC 10022. 212-627-8080. **Christopher Hyland, Inc.,** Cabochon, 100% silk douppioni, 979 3rd Ave., NYC 10022. 212-688-6121. Available through designers. **Brunschwig & Fils,** Bellagio, 100% silk damask, 979 3rd Ave., NYC 10022. 212-838-7878. Available through designers. **Christopher Hyland, Inc.,** Tara B, 100% silk douppion. **Anna French** through Classic Revivals, Hopscotch, 100% cotton, 1 Design Center Pl., Boston, MA 02110. 617-574-9030. Available through designers. **Donghia Textiles,** Crown Jewels, 81% rayon/19% polyester, $87/yard, 800-DONGHIA. **Schumacher,** Kanpur silk, 800-332-3384. **Rose Cumming, Inc.,** Caserta, 100% silk, 232 E. 59th St., NY 10022. 212-758-0844. Available through designers. **Manuel Canovas,** Tilda, 73% viscose/27% cotton, 979 3rd Ave., NYC 10022. 212-752-9588. Available through designers. **Clarence House,** Vega Agate, 57% bemberg/43% silk. Available through designers. **Pollack & Associates,** Celebration, 67% cotton/33% viscose, 150 Varick St., NYC 10013. 212-627-7766. Available through designers. **page 319, Chair with wicker frame,** cotton-velvet cushion, and metal legs, $480, Salon Moderne, 281 Lafayette St., NYC 10012. 212-219-3439. **Awning,** 100% cotton, Anna French through Classic Revivals. **Jacket,** marabou feathers, $6,420; **sequinned top,** wool, $850; Yves Saint Laurent Rive Gauche, 543 Madison Ave., NYC 10022. 212-832-7100. **Purple, yellow and green blanket,** knitted polyester fleece, 60" x 72", $80, Comfort Zone Co., 72 Cotton Mill Hill, A-39, Brattlebro, VT 05301. 800-624-1404. **Rug,** Swurl Green, 100% nylon, 6' x 9', $425, Enzo Artifacts Inc., PO Box 457, E. Amherst, NY 14051. 800-621-4544. **Throw pillow,** Bellagio, 100% silk damask, Brunschwig & Fils. Available through designers. **Wallpaper with blue dots,** Dotswall, $50/double roll, Enzo Artifacts Inc. **Cosmetic case,** 100% cotton, $110, Emilio Pucci. **Pillow with yellow buttons,** 100% linen, $64, Archipelago, 525 Broadway, NYC 10012. 212-334-9460. **Jean Cocteau pillow,** silk dupioni, $84, Maximillian Crab, 217 E. 30th St., NYC 10016. 212-725-4668. **Grasscloth wall covering,** $25.99/single roll, Seabrook Wall Coverings, Inc., 1325 Farmville Rd., Memphis, TN 38122. 800-238-9152. **Bolster,** $350, Aero, 132 Spring St., NYC 10012. 212-966-1500. **Fabric,** Livia, 100% silk, $139.50/yd, Zimmer+Rohde, 979 Third Ave., NYC 10022. 212-627-8080. **Tassels,** Samouri tieback, rayon/cotton, $600 each, Houlès USA, 8584 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90069. 310-652-6171. **Pillow with swirls,** Scheherazade, silk dupioni, $187, Christine Van Der Hurd. 212-343-9070. **Wallpaper with blue swirls,** Squigwall, $50/double roll, Enzo Artifacts Inc. **page 320, Stool,** tubular steel with polyester/cotton upholstery, $59, IKEA, Plymouth Commons, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462. 410-931-8940 on East Coast; 818-912-1119 on West Coast. **Chair,** Roscoe, ultrasuede and powder-coated steel, $675, In House, 7370 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036. 213-931-4420. **Chair,** kiln-dried maple and 100% worsted nylon, $645, Keilhauer, 1459 Birchmount Rd., Scarborough, Ontario, M1P 2E3, Canada. 800-724-5665. **page 321, Vase,** Trasparenze, by Claudio La Viola, $170, Zani & Zani at Moss, 146 Greene Street, NYC 10012. 212-226-2190. **Beach towel,** 100% cotton, $350, Emilio Pucci, E. 64th St., NYC 10021. 212-752-4777. **Lamps,** Corda, $1,667; Vaso, $1,000, Donghia Furniture, 800-DONGHIA. **Coat,** cotton/rayon jacquard, $283, Cynthia Rowley. 212-575-9020. **Hose,** Donna Karan, 800-342-7070. **Shoes,** Swing Out, leather, $455, Susan Bennis Warren Edwards, 22 W. 57th St., NYC 10019. 800-634-9884. **Rug,** Aspen, 8' x 11', 100% wool, $1,599, Karastan, 800-234-1120. **Lamp,** by Vistosi, metal-and-glass with vinyl shade, $850, Fred Silberman, 83 Wooster St., NYC 10012. 212-925-9470. **Chair,** 100% cotton velvet, $1,838, Palazzetti, 152 Wooster St., NYC 10012. 212-260-8815. **Dress,** silk, $495, Emporio Armani, 110 Fifth Ave., NYC 10011. 212-727-3240. **Chenille rug,** 100% cotton, 3' x 5', $52, Import Specialists. 800-334-4044. **Shoes,** Capo, leather, $475, Manolo Blahnik, 15 W. 55th St., NYC 10019. 212-582-3007. **pages 322-323,** (clockwise from top) **Versace,** porcelain, $195, 355 Michele Pl., Carlstadt, NJ 07072. 201-804-8000 x226. **Benrues,** Limoges porcelain, $95, . 800-993-2580. **Raynaud & Co. at Tipperary,** dinner plate $58; cup, $45; saucer, $22, all Limoges porcelain, 39 Ave. at the Common, Shrewsbury, NJ 07702. 908-935-1143. **Villeroy & Boch,** porcelain, $37, 5 Vaughn Dr., Princeton, NJ 08540. 800-VILLEROY. **Vase,** $150, Barneys NYC. 212-826-8900. **Shoes,** leather, $200, Belgian, 60 E. 56th St., NYC 10022. 212-755-7372. **Dress,** LaRiccia, Schumacher, 800-332-3384; made by Kimball Stoddard, at Michael Atchison Associates, 202 W. 40th St., NYC 10018. 212-768-1262.

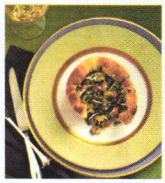
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page 331, Osborne & Little, 979 3rd Ave., NYC 10022. 212-751-3333. Rosenthal Studio-Linie, 355 Michele Pl., Carlstadt, NJ 07072. 201-804-8000 x221. Design Design, Inc. 616-774-2448. Private Lives, 800-499-8484. ABC Carpet & Home, 888 Broadway, NYC 10003. 212-473-3000. Chambers, 800-334-9790. Any questions, Designers Guild, 267-277 Kings Rd., London SW3 5EN, England. 44-171-243-7300.

IN BETWEEN, PAGES 332-333 Vases, Carpe Diem, 187 6th Ave., NYC 10013. 212-337-0018. **Champagne bucket,** $3,100, The Dining Trade, 306 E. 61st St., NYC 10021. 212-755-2304. **Pitchers and glasses,** all at Takashimaya, 693 5th Ave., NYC 10022. 212-350-0100. **Ceramic cockatoo,** $375/pair,



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William-Wayne & Co., 850 Lexington Ave., NYC 10021. 800-318-3435.

BORDERS FOR A NEW WORLD, PAGES 334-345 Hair and makeup, Rickey Lee Babineaux for Sally Harlor. Donna Hackman, Salem Border Design, PO Box 251, Middleburg, VA 20118. Fax: 540-364-3012.

PRICKLY HEAT, PAGES 346-351 page 350, A aluminum lounge chairs, by Kitchell Interior Design, 7522 E. MacDonald Dr., Scottsdale, AZ 85250. 602-951-0280. **Concrete pot,** Concrete Design, Inc., 3650 So. Broadmont, Tucson, AZ 85713. 520-624-6653.

FEAST FOR FIRST HARVEST, PAGES 352-361 Helen Turley's wines, PO Box 332, Calistoga, CA 94515. **All napkins,** by Muriel Grateau, 100% linen, $30/each, Interieurs, 114 Wooster St., NYC 10012. 212-343-0800. **page 352, Salad plates,** $50/each; **dinner plates,** $65/each, all Rainbow, Limoges porcelain, Robert Haviland & C. Parlon. 800-993-2580. All glasses, Riedel Crystal of America, Inc., 24 Aero Road, Bohemia, NY 11716. 800-642-1859. **Silverware,** all silver-plated, Cluny, Christofle, 800-806-7540. **Custom-embroidered tablecloth,** The Oak Scroll, 72" x 94", 50% linen/50% cotton, $4,500/tablecloth & 12 napkins, Anichini La Collecione, 466 North Robertson, Los Angeles, CA 90048. 310-657-4293. **Wooden vessel,** by Philip Moulthrop, red maple, $850, Gump's, 135 Post Street, San Francisco, CA 94108. 800-766-7628. **page 353, Plate and soup bowl,** Amadeus, porcelain, $187/plate and $103/bowl, Richard-Ginori Corp America, 41 Madison Ave., NYC 10010. 212-213- **Wineglass,** Argos, crystal, $145, Lalique. 800-9 2580. **Fork,** Scroll, sterling silver, $295, James Robinson, Inc., 480 Park Ave., NYC 10022. 212- 6166. **page 357, Plate,** Robert Haviland & C. P 800-993-2580. **page 361 Plate,** Kilim, Limoges porcelain, $120, Puiforcat. 800-993-2580. **Butt knife,** Octagonal Pistol, sterling silver, $165, Jan Robinson, Inc., 480 Park Ave., NYC 10022. 212- 6166. **Custom-made tablecloth,** 50% linen/50 cotton, Anichini La Collecione.

UNCORKED PAGE 362 Wine glasses, Baccarat, 625 Madison Ave., NYC 10022. 800-777-0100.

AND ANOTHER THING . . . PAGE 370 Hedgehog Habitats, PO Box 76, Mamaroneck, NY 10543. 8 433-4437;www.wnis.com/-hedgehogs; hedgehogs@wnis.com. **Sub-Zero,** PO Box 4413 Madison, WI, 53744-4130. 800-532-7820. **Glidde** ICI Paints, for independent dealers, 800-221-4 for Glidden's stores, 800-984-5444.

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—PRODUCED BY JOYCE BAUT

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Past Perfect

BY VÉRONIQUE VIENNE



Woman at Sea

Before she emerged as a redoubtable newspaper publisher, Dolly Schiff served me as Mrs. George Backer, a reluctant socialite adrift in the bubbly world of champagne cocktails and nautically themed dressing rooms

OYSTER BAY, 1934 There were no glass ceilings in those days, just exquisitely decorated glass walls. Like other young heiresses, Dorothy Backer, née Schiff, spent her time treading water in the oases of Fifth Avenue, Long Island, and Palm Beach. When photos of her oddly phosphorescent green-and-white dressing room were published in *House & Garden* in 1934, Backer hadn't a clue that she would eventually become the majority owner of the *New York Post* and a power in the Democratic party. For one thing, she had never worked a day in her life. For another, she was a staunch Republican. Her sole preoccupation at the time was to watch the horizon for a suitable husband: her second marriage—to the uselessly handsome George Backer—seemed about as likely to survive as the tropical fish who swam in the pedestals of her Lucite dressing table. "Marriage," she later wrote, "was the only escape in those days."

She might also have mentioned the movies. It was in 1934 that Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire's *The Gay Divorcée* was released, a movie that struck a chord in the national psyche by sanctioning divorce and promoting reckless escapism. The movie's blinding-white sets, designed by Van Nest Polglase as a celluloid version of modernism, captured the sugar-coated stylishness of the period and were copied by decorators across the country.

The lighting of these Hollywood-inspired rooms was critical. No sun was allowed to disturb their delicate chromatic balance. Drawn all day, the venetian blinds also shielded residents from the Depression-era despair beyond their walls.

Dorothy Backer's new house, a vast mansion near the Pine Hollow Country Club in Oyster Bay, was typical of the Polglase style—a huge white set perfect for a life of gracious seclusion, or perhaps, a nervous collapse. As soon as she moved in, Backer hated it. Suffering from intense anxiety attacks, she locked herself in the bedroom and stared at the walls. One wonders if her decorator, Marian Hall, had meant to provide her with the perfect environment for a breakdown.

If the dressing room is any indication of what the bedroom looked like, one can understand Dorothy's angst. The chartreuse deep-sea diorama, accented with swags of white rope, suggests a shipwreck of sorts. The room's ghostly objects cast no shadows on its bottomless black carpet, nor do its filmy glass screens offer any protection from the creatures that lurk in this surreal aquatic scene.

Noted analyst Harry Stack Sullivan convinced Backer to leave her fancy fish tank and drive to New York City five days a week for therapy. To her surprise, she loved the commute. For the first time in her life she had something to do.

Soon charity work became part of her therapy and she joined a bipartisan committee concerned with the unemployed. There, she met Eleanor Roosevelt and was impressed by her courage and dedication. In 1936, a still-fragile Dorothy Backer was introduced to FDR. The warmth of his smile penetrated her Deco glass prison. Shortly thereafter, she joined the Democratic party and fired her doctor. "I didn't need a psychiatrist now," she remarked. "I had a President."

another thing...

Buy your child a hedgeho instead of a hamster.

Plant chartreuse plants
around those chrysanthemum borders,
if you must have mums.
Try golden creeping jenny
(Lysimachia nummularria 'Aurea'*).*

Ban flavored coffees.

Get rid of the rain drum end table.

Buy a Sub-Zero drawer system for your home office—or the dressing room of the master
Why pad all the way to the kitchen for a Guinness?

Don't put on airs about mulch—
cocoa shells are not necessary.

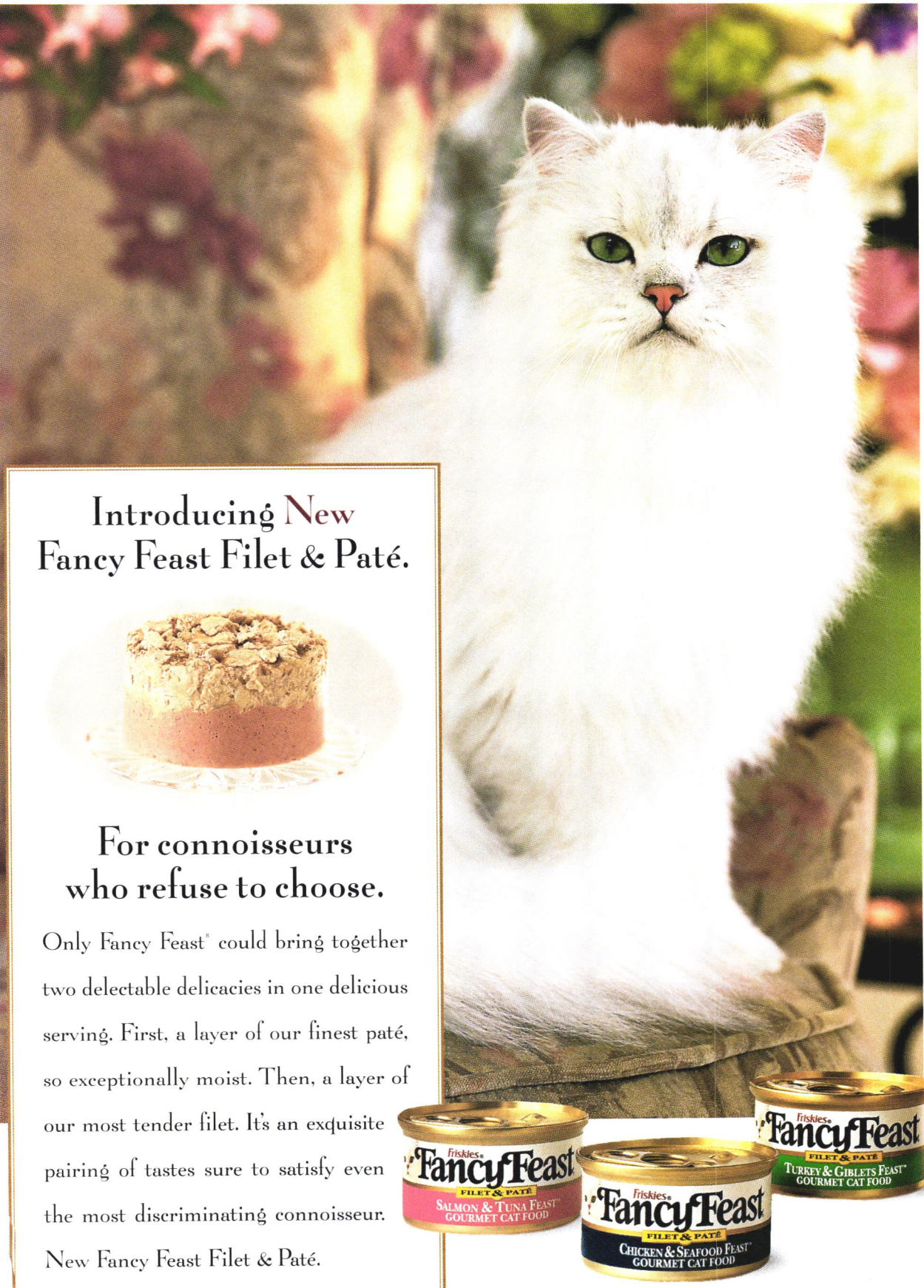
Paint your bedroom lavender—
try Glidden's "Violet Tinge."

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and decent work gloves.
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flimsy flowery cotton things?

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